Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIX, Issue No. 39 | SATURDAY FEBRUARY 14, 2009 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

NMI special education program lacks specialists. PAGE 2

Five new buses arrive for public schools. PAGE 3

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Should Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution be placed on the ballot in 2011?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

137 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

Wild Winds

Strong winds knock out power to hundreds of thousands of customers, disrupt travel and kill at least five.

NATION...Page 10

Image Awards

Beyonce and Jennifer Hudson wow the audience during the 40th annual NAACP Image Awards.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 21

BY THE NUMBERS

Valentine's Day 2009

Opinions abound as to who was the original Valentine, with the most popular theory that he was a clergyman who was executed for secretly marrying couples in ancient Rome in spite of Emperor Claudius II, who felt that marriage weakened his soldiers. In any event, in A.D. 496, Pope

See VALENTINE'S on Page 4

House puts off override on Fitial's budget veto

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives yesterday deferred voting to override Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's veto of the $156.76 million budget bill for Fiscal Year 2009, but not before Rep. Tina Sablan raised concerns about alleged favors offered in exchange for not supporting an override.

"There's concern about the kind of gamesmanship going on. …My office received word that favors are being offered in exchange for not voting for an override. Jobs are being offered to relatives of politicians, releases of allotments. The little favors, concessions

See HOUSE on Page 4

RELATED NEW

'Budget bill a step in right direction' PAGE 5

NY plane crash kills 49

ON THE NET

Audio of air traffic control: http://snurl.com/bsx2j

CLARENCE, N.Y. (AP) — A sputtering commuter plane slammed into a suburban Buffalo home in a fiery explosion that killed all 48 people on board and one person on the ground, authorities said.

Flames silhouetted the shattered home after Continental Connection Flight 3407 plummeted into it around 10:20 p.m.

"The whole sky was lit up orange," said Bob Dworak, who lives less than a mile from the crash site. "All the sudden, there was a big bang, and the house shook."

The 74-seat Q400 Bombardier aircraft was carrying 5,000 pounds of fuel and apparently exploded on impact, Erie County Executive Chris Collins said.

Firefighters got as close to the plane as they could, he said. "They were shouting out to see if there were any survivors on

See CRASH on Page 4

SOURCE: ESRI AP

AP

A plane burns after it crashed into a house in Clarence Center, N.Y., Thursday Feb. 12, 2009. Authorities say it was Continental Airlines Flight 3407 operated by Manassas, Va.-based Colgan Air.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Kagman High School National Honor Society performed their group community service for the month of January by cleaning the beautiful PauPau beach area. At the far right is the NHS advisor, Mrs. Liz Hofschneider.

BOE approves $38M budget for FY2010

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Understanding the current state of government coffers, the Board of Education submitted a budget request of only $38 million for fiscal year 2010. The amount covers personnel and operations costs of all schools in the CNMI.

The funding is slightly higher than what PSS received in 1999, which amounted to $37.2 million.

Sablan

In a presentation Thursday, Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan disclosed that $31 million of the proposed budget is for personnel's salary, $3.4 million is for utilities, and $2.3 million is for "all others."

PSS officials explained that of the $31 million personnel cost, some $1.5 million will be earmarked for vacant positions that PSS intends to fill.

From the $2.3 million "all

See BOE on Page 4

Local

NMI special education program lacks specialists

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The CNMI special education and early intervention programs continue to be plagued by lack of specialists, according to acting coordinator Susane Lizama.

Although enrollment continues to increase every year, Lizama said there are no specialists being hired to fill certain categories.

"I've been at the program for 20 years and since then, we never had enough speech pathologists and occupational therapists—all vital in the operation of the program," said Lizama, who added that the lack of personnel for these hard-to-fill positions affects the programs' operations.

Lizama disclosed that besides the lack of specialists, the shortage of service providers is also a concern.

Currently, there are approximately 818 special education students enrolled in the CNMI taken cared of by 30 service providers who also happen to be degree holders.

She worries that these providers may burn out because of the many requirements and duties they perform for this special group of students.

"That for me is the direct impact of not having enough providers and specialists for the program," Lizama said.

In May, a grant application will be submitted to the federal government which provides approximately $4.7 million annually for special education and intervention programs.

She said the funding is enough to accommodate the needs of special students.

"The funding for our needed specialists are there…the problem is we can't find qualified candidates from abroad," she said.

High suspension rate

Lizama, meanwhile, admitted that the lack of enough service providers may also contribute to the high suspension rates in some public schools.

She said the program's behavior specialist is working closely with schools to see the correlation between the suspension and the offenses of students.

Lizama said she will push for in-house suspension among schools to keep the academic activities for special kids.

However, school principals interviewed by *Saipan Tribune* admitted that although they want to implement in-house suspension, the lack of teachers to supervise them is a concern.

Lizama said she will also push for pay differential for teachers in the program who also have the needed bachelor's degree.

"The pay differential is similar to what is provided for certified teachers in the classrooms," Lizama said, adding the program needs 10 more teachers.

Rough seas today until Tuesday

The CNMI Emergency Management Office is strongly advising the public to avoid venturing near exposed beaches and reefs as rip currents still pose a high risk to persons in the water.

In an advisory issued yesterday, EMO said that a long period north swell will combine with trade wind waves and swells to produce combined seas of 11-12 feet through Sunday, falling to 9 feet on Tuesday.

Hazardous seas are expected through early Tuesday morning. The small craft advisory for hazardous seas is now in effect until 6am Tuesday.

Yesterday afternoon, east winds were expected at 20-25 knots, with wind waves of 8-10 feet and mixed swells east at 3 feet and north at 3 feet.

Last night, east wind was projected at 20-25 knots, with wind waves of 8-9 feet. Mixed swell east 5 feet and north 3 feet, with scattered showers.

Today, east wind is projected to reach 20-25 knots, with wind waves of 8-10 feet. East swell is at 6 feet and north, 3 feet, together with scattered shower.

Tonight, east wind is at 20 knots with gusts of up to 30 knots and wind waves of 7-9 feet. East swell will be at 5 feet and north, 3-4 feet, with scattered showers in the evening.

On Sunday, east wind will be 20 knots with gusts of up to 30 knots. Wind waves will be 7-9 feet and east swells at 5 feet and north 4-5 feet.

Monday's east wind will be 15-20 knots, with wind waves of 5-7 feet, east swell of 5-6 feet and northeast, 4-5 feet.

On Tuesday, the east wind will be 10-15 knots; wind waves will be 3-5 feet, east swells 7 feet and northeast 3-4 feet.

Projections are based on information received from National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam and compiled at EMO. ***(EMO)***

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Five new buses arrive for public schools

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Public School System formally received five spanking new 2009 Blue Bird Vision school buses during a simple turnover ceremony Thursday at the Board of Education.

PSS bus team leader Steve Pangelinan confirmed yesterday that all five 66-seat passenger vehicles will be used by Saipan schools, which currently has only 16 operational buses at its disposal.

Pangelinan said three units are now in the shop either for factory defect or mechanical troubles.

Costing about $95,000 apiece, funding was sourced from a federal grant from the Federal Transport Administration for fiscal year 2007.

Pangelinan yesterday disclosed that the CNMI secured continuous funding support from the federal agency until 2011.

"PSS has secured funding [from the federal agency] until 2011 which may provide our schools 10-12 units," Pangelinan said.

The bus team leader said Saipan schools will now have 21 buses to transport students to and from schools.

On a daily basis, Pangelinan said the 16 buses transported approximately 2,500-3,500 on Saipan.

Pangelinan said the next shipment of school buses will be awarded to Rota and Tinian schools.

At present, Rota has only one operational bus after two of its units broke down, while Tinian maintained all its three vehicles in operation.

Pangelinan admitted that in order to establish complete service in schools on Saipan, PSS needs approximately 25 to 30 buses.

Due to limited local funding though, the bus fleet was affected and could only employ six bus drivers.

He hopes to get five additional drivers soon—four for Saipan and one for Tinian.

Pangelinan said the riders' policy was proven effective in maintaining the condition of PSS property like buses.

"We're seeing a result… and the policy has been effective," he said, adding that since the revision of the rule that students' parents are also held accountable for the damage caused by their kids, only few minor violations have been noted.

Retainer wall will prevent flooding at NMI museum

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

A retainer wall that would solve the problem of flooding at the NMI Museum of History and Culture will be built soon, according to museum director Robert Hunter.

Hunter said the design for the project has already been approved following recent meetings with the Department of Public Works and the Division of Environmental Quality officials.

Hunter said the retainer wall, which will be built at the existing drainage along Middle Road, would prevent the flow of water during heavy downpour.

Most of the water comes from the Sugar King Park.

"We hope that this would soon solve our problem," Hunter said.

He said the Legislature was able to utilize funds for this project from the budget for the precinct in Garapan.

The estimated cost for the construction of the wall is from $15,000 to $17,000.

The Museum is operated under the Saipan Municipality.

It will be recalled that heavy downpour flooded the museum in October last year, forcing the management to temporarily close the area for visitors.

The flood brought several inches of water and mud into the exhibit area and administrative offices.

The museum houses many of the CNMI's valuable items from the past. Its bank of artifacts include treasures from different foreign governments—the Spanish, German and Japanese periods to the Trust Territory and the present Commonwealth.

Visitors and scholars can visit the area to study artifacts like old canoes, jars of all shapes and sizes, exhibits, gold pieces, World War II relics and memorabilia, and other pieces of history.

Kilili joins Hispanic Caucus

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Congressional Hispanic Caucus has added a new member to its roster. Rep. Gregorio Sablan, the Delegate from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, officially became a member of the CHC yesterday. This new addition brings the total number of members for the CHC to 25, with 24 members in the House and one in the U.S. Senate.

"As the chair of the CHC, I am proud to see our continued growth and welcome Congressman Sablan," said CHC chair Rep. Nydia Velázquez. "The expansion of the Caucus reflects the growing presence of Latinos in our nation. Together we will work to create job opportunities, build strong communities and provide a solid foundation for hard-working Hispanic families in the Northern Marianas and throughout the United States."

Sablan

Sablan is the first congressional representative of the Northern Marianas, after the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008 granted the insular area a seat in Congress. Immigration laws for the Northern Mariana Islands have recently changed, as the Commonwealth has been brought into the U.S. federal immigration system after having controlled their own system for the last 30 years.

"I'm very excited about the intensity of the discussion in today's meeting. The members have so much enthusiasm for the issues they are talking about, and for the people they represent. I am grateful that I have the opportunity to be a part of the CHC," said Sablan. "The people of the Northern Mariana Islands are thinking a lot about the ways that federal immigration law can be made better. This is the group that is working on immigration reform and writing the new immigration laws. I want to be working with that group, working on this issue that is most important to the people of the Northern Mariana Islands. ***(CHC)***

Afetnas home was intentionally set on fire, according to DPS

An unoccupied house in Afetnas was intentionally set on fire by an unidentified person or persons last week, according to the Department of Public Safety yesterday.

DPS spokesperson Lei Ogumoro said nobody was reported injured and no one has been arrested yet.

Ogumoro said that last Thursday, Feb. 5, at 6:53pm, DPS received a report of a structure fire in the Afetnas area.

According to preliminary investigation, Ogumoro said, the blaze fully engulfed the house and its roof had already collapsed by the time firefighters arrived.

"Suppression was immediately commenced upon the arrival of Tanke-1, bringing the fire under control at 7:25pm," she said.

Based on the findings of arson investigators, the house was intentionally burned, Ogumoro said.

"This case is pending further investigation. The owner of the house, Ms. Remedio T. Nakatsukasa, is reportedly off-island," Ogumoro said.

Ogumoro did not mention in her report the type of the affected house. She also did not say why DPS released the information to the media only yesterday. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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Judge: Fund issue a Commonwealth problem

Govendo cites importance to get Legislature involved

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo yesterday underscored the importance of finally resolving the Retirement Fund's lawsuit over the government's failure to remit the required employer contributions.

At a status conference, Govendo suggested to the parties in the case to get the Legislature, who has the control of government funding, involved in the discussion.

"It would be negligent for us if we keep continuing this!" said the judge as he granted Fund's counsel Viola Alepuyo's request to conduct two separate hearings.

The sole issue remaining in the case is to determine the amount of damages owed the Fund.

Govendo set the phase one hearing for April 20, and phase 2 for June 8.

The judge said he is hoping that the Legislature will get involved because there are so many people affected by the issue and that this is an election year.

He compared the Fund to a savings account that is not earning an interest, but people are withdrawing their money.

"Eventually it becomes zero! That's the issue!" Govendo said.

He said this is a major issue affecting almost 3,000 people in the CNMI.

"This is a Commonwealth issue. It's a Commonwealth problem," Govendo said.

Alepuyo said they asked for the April hearing so they could show the actual damages owed the Fund.

Alepuyo said that, in the June hearing, they could bring in experts to show just how much the Fund has lost because of the unpaid contributions and the loss of possible investments.

She agreed with Govendo that the Legislature should be brought in and be part of the discussion process.

"The problem is really is, if you think about the hundreds of millions of dollars that is involved, it's overwhelming! But I think that if you cut it down into several different parts and address that individually and separately, then once you able to resolve one issue and move on to the next one, then you can overcome it," the lawyer told the media.

Assistant Attorney General Anthony Welch, counsel for the government, also agreed that without the Legislature's participation, there is no practical solution to the issue.

Welch told the court that the government should be given enough time to address the issue.

"This is not a simple case!" Welch stressed.

Fund Board chair Juan T. Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune* after the hearing that he is happy that the judge set some dates and that even the government is pushing to resolve the issue.

"We believe those dates are very instrumental for further discovery and also for presentation. We are hopeful that the Legislature will get involved because it is clear that we would also need the Legislature to address some funding issues, especially when the awards are presented and approved by the court," Guerrero said.

The Fund filed the lawsuit against the government, Gov. Benigno Fitial, Department of Finance, and Finance Secretary Eloy Inos in 2006 over the government's failure to remit required payments.

In November 2008, Govendo granted the Fund's request for default judgment after the government, through the Attorney General's Office, waited nearly two years to answer the complaint.

CRASH

From Page 1

the plane. Truly a very heroic effort, but there were no survivors."

The twin-turboprop operated by Colgan Air was flying from Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey to Buffalo Niagara International Airport in light snow, fog and 17 mph winds.

Prior to the crash, the voice of a female pilot on Flight 3407 could be heard communicating with air traffic controllers, according to a recording of the Buffalo air traffic control's radio messages shortly before the crash captured by the Web site www.liveatc.net. Neither the controller nor the pilot shows any concern that anything is out of the ordinary as the airplane is asked to fly at 2,300 feet.

A minute later, the controller tries to contact the plane but hears no response. After a pause, he tries to contact the plane again.

Then the controller asks the pilot of a nearby Delta Air Lines plane to see whether he can see the Continental flight. The Delta pilot says no.

About three to four minutes after that, he tells an unidentified listener to contact authorities on the ground in the Clarence area.

"You need to find if anything is on the ground," the controller says. "All I can tell you is the aircraft is over the marker (landing beacon), and we're not talking to them now."

Later, he tells all aircraft monitoring the same frequency: "We did have a Dash 8 over the marker that didn't make the airport. He appears to be about five miles away from the airport."

While residents of his neighborhood about 10 miles from the Buffalo airport were used to planes rumbling overhead, witnesses said this one sounded louder than usual, sputtered and made some odd noises.

After hearing the crash, Dworak drove over to take a look, and "all we were seeing was 50 to 100 foot flames and a pile of rubble on the ground. It looked like the house just got destroyed the instant it got hit."

Witness Tony Tatro said he saw the plane flying low and knew it was in trouble.

"It was not spiraling at all. The left wing was a little low," he told WGRZ-TV.

Doug Hartmayer, a spokesman for the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority that operates the airport, said it was unknown if the airport reported any trouble.

"There is an extensive investigation as we speak," Hartmayer said. "There was very little or any communication before the crash."

"The plane simply dropped off the radar screen," he said.

VALENTINE'S

From Page 1

Gelasius I declared Feb. 14 as Valentine Day. Through the centuries, the Christian holiday became a time to exchange love messages, and St. Valentine became the patron saint of lovers. Esther Howland, a native of Massachusetts, is given credit for selling the first mass-produced valentine cards in the 1840s. The spirit of love continues today as valentines are sent with sentimental verses, from and to young and old romantics.

CANDY IS DANDY

1,170: Number of locations producing chocolate and cocoa products in 2006. These establishments employed 39,457 people. California led the nation in the number of such establishments with 128, followed by Pennsylvania with 116.

473: Number of locations that produced nonchocolate confectionary products in 2006. These establishments employed 18,733 people.

$13.9 billion: Total value of shipments in 2006 for firms producing chocolate and cocoa products. Nonchocolate confectionery product manufacturing, meanwhile, was a $7.2 billion industry.

3,563: Number of confectionery and nut stores in the United States in 2006.

24.5 pounds: Per capita consumption of candy by Americans in 2007.

FLOWERS

$416 million: The combined wholesale value of domestically produced cut flowers in 2007 for all flower-producing operations with $100,000 or more in sales. Among states, California was the leading producer, alone accounting for about three-quarters of this amount ($320 million).

$29 million: The combined wholesale value of domestically produced cut roses in 2007 for all operations with $100,000 or more in sales.

20,227: The number of florists nationwide in 2006. These businesses employed 98,373 people.

JEWELRY

28,300: Number of jewelry stores in the United States in 2006. Jewelry stores offer engagement, wedding and other rings to lovers of all ages. In February 2008, these stores sold $2.6 billion in merchandise.

The merchandise at these locations could well have been produced at one of the nation's 1,777 jewelry manufacturing establishments.

BE MINE

2.2 million: The number of marriages that took place in the United States in 2007. That breaks down to a little more than 6,000 a day.

126,354: The number of marriages performed in Nevada during 2007. So many couples tie the knot in the Silver State that it ranked fifth nationally in marriages, even though its total population that year among states was 35th. (California ranked first in marriages.)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

BOE

From Page 1

others" account, the following will be paid:

- $120,000 for building rental;
- $150,000 for bus maintenance and repairs;
- $300,000 for bus fuel;
- $100,000 E-rate program local matching fund; and
- $200,000 for the schools' security.

Saipan Tribune learned that PSS originally planned to recommend a $52 million budget for next fiscal year, with about $19 million to be used for non-personnel expenses. Of the non-personnel cost, $12 million was supposed to be allotted for school improvements.

The education commissioner said that after careful assessment and consultation with the PSS management team, the decision was made to approve for submission to the board the $38 million appropriation.

The plan, however, is to propose a separate funding for school improvements and renovations, which the commissioner thinks could be funded by Capital Improvement Project monies.

The PSS presentation disclosed that in the past three years, the PSS budget translates to only 22 percent of the general fund.

Utility biggest problem

During the presentation, PSS financial consultant Ed Tenorio disclosed that PSS incurred $3.4 million in utility costs as of January 2009. He cited utility costs as among the biggest challenges for the system next fiscal year.

PSS began paying for its power consumption only in Fiscal Year 2007. This cost was previously shouldered was by the central government.

In that same fiscal year, the Public School System was given $37.2 million that went down to a mere $35 million, including utilities.

PSS and CUC have been at odds over the former's arrears, which amounted to $1.2 million in December 2008.

With the across-the-board budget cut of 5 percent, PSS is now operating at $33 million.

Savings on class-size reduction, board's PD

In looking for areas that may generate savings for the system, board member Galvin Deleon Guerrero pointed out that since students population slightly decreased this school year, he recommended that savings in that area may be considered.

While vice chair Herman T. Guerrero acknowledged the smaller population, he maintained that schools cannot just enforce a class-size reduction as mandated by the U.S. Department of Education.

Board member Tanya King also raised a concern regarding professional development funds being proposed for the board's travel within the CNMI.

She said board members are allocated their own per diem money during the duration of their terms.

HOUSE

From Page 1

here and there. Naturally, that presents a challenge," said Sablan.

On Tuesday, Fitial vetoed the $156.76 million budget bill submitted by the Legislature, which includes $148 million in local revenue collections, due to lack of austerity measures.

The following day, the Senate overrode the governor's veto.

At yesterday's House session, House Floor Leader Joseph James N. Camacho offered a motion to override the governor's veto of House Bill 16-213.

During discussion on the governor's veto, Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider said the governor does not need the Legislature to implement austerity measures. Just like other members, Hofschneider pointed out that the administration talks about belt-tightening measures but continues to hire additional employees.

He said the administration is "blackmailing" members of the Legislature into taking away salaries of government employees to be able to pay the salaries of over 400 new employees hired.

"We're being duped into participating in a disastrous policy…" he said, adding that the governor could have line item vetoed those sections of the bill that he does not agree to.

During the session, Sablan said the governor's reason for vetoing the bill "is weaker than the last one," adding that the previous austerity Fridays instituted by the administration didn't save as much money as expected.

"If the governor's reason for vetoing the bill holds no water…I want to ask members what your rationale would be for not overriding it now?" she asked.

Sablan and Rep. Diego Benavente also said members of the majority felt there were not enough votes to override the veto so they supported a motion to defer action on the budget bill.

Two majority members – Reps. Rosemond Santos and David Apatang – were not at the session. Rep. Ed Salas was on medical leave.

An override needs at least 14 votes from the 20-member House.

Of the 17 House members present at yesterday afternoon's session, 10 voted to defer action on the bill. Rep. Frank dela Cruz offered to lay the bill on the table.

The House is expected to have a session next week.

Sablan said the deferment of action on the governor's veto message will give House members more time to review Fitial's reasons for vetoing the budget bill and to "check our conscience why we should override the veto."

She also urged members of the community to contact their representatives to voice out their concerns about the budget.

"What I was hoping to hear is new and compelling reason not to support an override of the veto but there's none…If there's lingering questions in the mind of the members about the override, we would want to know," said Sablan

On Thursday, the Fitial administration said it is sponsoring a standalone bill that will provide for austerity measures that include the reinstatement of austerity Fridays/unpaid holidays and a reduction in the employer contribution to the Retirement Fund from 18 percent to 11 percent.

'Budget bill a step in right direction'

BY MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The chairwoman of the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee expressed has her disappointment with the governor's veto action on the budget for Fiscal Year 2009, countering the concerns raised by the island's chief executive.

"The bill vetoed by the governor tightens controls on spending and reporting. …While not the entire solution to the fiscal problems of the CNMI government, it is a step in the right direction," said Sen. Maria Frica Pangelinan in her message to the Senate's presiding officer.

She claimed the governor's reasons for the veto action deserve clarification.

The governor had cited that the Legislature failed to address how the same number of employees and the same programs and operations will continue at the same level with reduced resources.

Pangelinan said under the Planning and Budgeting Act, the Legislature is authorized to set maximum FTE levels and these numbers mandate that an expenditure authority may not exceed the number.

"There are no restrictions on employing fewer," she said.

Additionally, she said there is nothing in the budget bill that supports the governor's statement that salaries remain intact. Pangelinan said the bill does not address that level of detail.

"In fact, it is appropriate for each expenditure authority to look at their allocation for personnel expenses and adjust their employment levels accordingly," she said.

Pangelinan

Pangelinan disagreed with the governor's claim that the budget bill, if passed, could lead to payless paydays, government shutdown and layoffs and that the only option is to implement austerity measures.

"I disagree that there is no other option beyond austerity measures. These measures proved to be fundamentally unfair in their application, not only to lower paid employees but also because of the many arbitrary and politically driven exemptions that were made," Pangelinan said.

She pointed out that the net savings during the period in which these austerity measures were applied was less than predicted. "The measures simply did not work as projected," she said.

The fiscal affairs chairwoman indicated that implementing austerity measures while allowing hiring to continue without strict controls makes no sense.

Although the provision was in the first budget bill, this time the governor objected to the reporting requirements for the Labor Department, saying it has no bearing on the budget process.

"The report from the Labor Department will in fact be crucial during the budget process for FY 2010. The Legislature needs to know how the department is functioning with the workload and employment levels they are operating with in order to properly support their efforts," Pangelinan said.

On the Compact Impact funds that Fitial said are improperly distributed in the budget plan, Pangelinan said that provision was in the original budget proposal and was equally matched in the second budget submission.

"This is unchanged in the current bill," she said, adding that this raises questions about why the Legislature was not notified via a budget amendment as provided by law.

BIRTHDAY BOY

Happy Birthday and Happy Valentine to our son Francisco "Ticqueen" Diaz, who is celebrating his second birthday today, Feb. 14, 2009, on Valentine day. May the Lord bless you with good health, filled with love and happiness. May He also watch you and guide you to be a good person during your lifetime. With love, mom, sister, brother, grandma, and grandpa.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

WARNING: Smoking can cause Cervical Cancer!

Don't smoke cigarettes. Women who smoke cigarettes INCREASE their risk of getting Cervical Cancer!

"According to the American Council on Science and Health, cancer causing substances from tobacco are found in the mucus on the cervix of women who smoke."

Talk to your health provider today about what YOU can do to prevent getting Cervical Cancer!

For more information, please contact the CNMI Breast and Cervical Screening Program at 236-8727/31 or email cnmibcsp@pticom.com

This ad is brought to you by the Department of Public Health's Breast and Cervical Screening Program with 100% funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

SIS Garage Sale

SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Saturday, February 28
Set Up: 6:00 AM
Sale: 6:30 AM—12:00 PM
Saipan International School

Tent Spaces cost $20 and are limited.

Call Mili at 288-9660 to Reserve your Space now!

Clean out your closet! It's a great opportunity to sell things you no longer need and find just what you are looking for!

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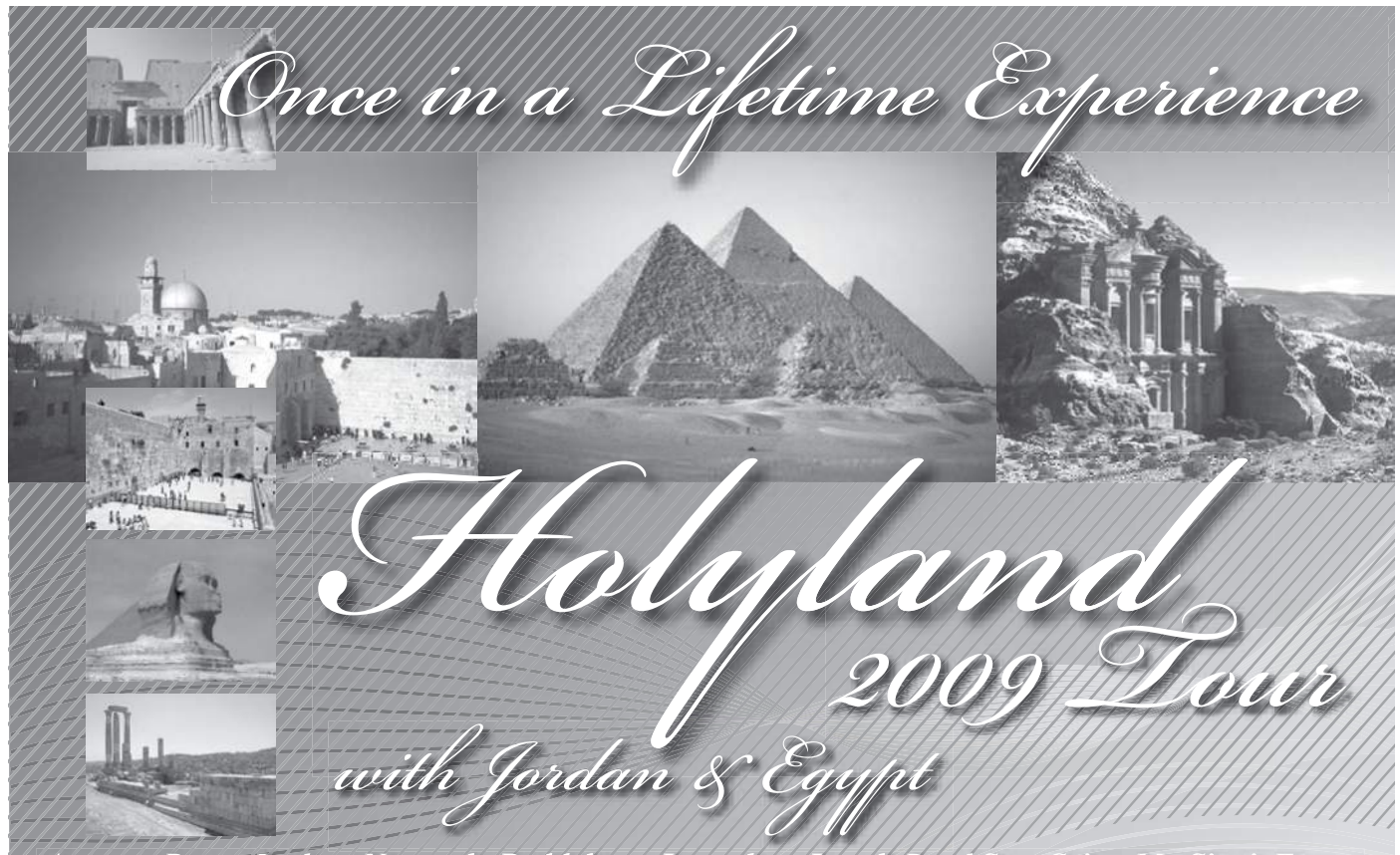

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XIX, Issue No. 39

Published daily at 2/F CIC Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Evolution's survival

Today is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, an occasion that ought to be cause for universal celebration. Not only was Darwin's theory of evolution a scientific epiphany, millions of people owe their lives and their health to research that is predicated on Darwin's insight that human beings share a common ancestor with other species. But there is a malodorous skunk at this garden party: a movement rooted in American-style biblical fundamentalism that seeks to discredit Darwinism and undermine the teaching of evolution in public schools.

Like species in the Darwinian account, the opposition to evolution has mutated over the years. The initial strategy was to ban the teaching of evolution outright, as Tennessee did in 1925 (provoking the Scopes "monkey trial") and Arkansas did in 1928. It wasn't until 40 years later that the Supreme Court invalidated Arkansas' law. That should have been the last word, but opponents of evolution have ingeniously recast their crusade, from "creationism," with explicit invocation of the Book of Genesis, to "creation science" to "intelligent design." For good measure, they have couched their arguments in terms of academic freedom.

Fortunately, the courts have seen through these subterfuges. But the fact that they had to intervene at all is a reminder that opposition to evolution persists in the face of overwhelming evidence. In a debate during the 2008 Republican presidential primary, three of the 10 candidates raised their hands when the moderator asked who didn't believe in evolution. Two-thirds of the respondents in a 2007 USA Today/Gallup poll said that it is definitely or probably true that God created humans in their present form within the last 10,000 years.

Explanations for this attitude abound: biblical literalism, uneasiness with Darwin's theory of natural selection, the mistaken belief that a scientific "theory" is just a guess, and a failure to distinguish between minor revisions of Darwin's theory and fundamental objections to it. The overriding reality may be that many Christians don't realize many of their coreligionists see no conflict between evolution and belief in God. In 1996, Pope John Paul II declared that evolution was "more than just a hypothesis." Francis Collins, who retired last year after 15 years as head of the Human Genome Project, an enterprise that presumes the truth of evolution, is a Christian.

However ingenious the arguments, opposition to evolution is literally unreasonable. Schools must stand firm against attempts to introduce theology into science classrooms—not out of veneration for Charles Darwin, but because students deserve to be told the truth.

(c) 2009, Los Angeles Times

Something Darwin didn't know

By RICK WEISS
Special to The Washington Post

The writer is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress.

Charles Darwin was nothing if not methodical. When the time came to consider marriage, he divided a sheet of paper into two sections, "Marry" and "Not Marry." Under the first heading he noted: "a friend in old age ... better than a dog anyhow." In the second he tallied counterarguments: "perhaps quarreling," he fretted, and "less money for books."

Darwin's commitment to weighing the facts, even when the topic was an emotional one, would serve competing advocates of science and religion well as the world celebrates the great naturalist's 200th birthday Thursday and the 150th anniversary of the publication of his "On the Origin of Species," with its groundbreaking explication of evolutionary theory. While Darwin himself never took his findings as definitive evidence against the existence of God, many people of faith have read that conclusion into his work. As a result, the man who first grasped biology's most unifying concept is today widely demonized as an enemy of the church, even as many scientists and others make a similar mistake and invoke Darwin in their rejection of everything theological.

> *"Over time Darwin rejected a literal reading of the Bible, concluding that, as a history text, it was "no more to be trusted than the sacred books of the Hindoos, or the beliefs of any barbarian."*

Darwin was a mostly Anglican biblical literalist when he set sail on his famed voyage aboard the Beagle. Like many Americans today, he believed that God created the world as it is, with all its countless species intact from the start. But Darwin's studies of rocks and fossils opened his eyes to the immensity of geologic time. And his keen observation of life's variations and adaptations sowed the seeds of his eventual revelation that mutation and natural selection, acting on simpler forms of life, could account for all biological diversity.

Darwin's basic insight threatened some conventional religious beliefs, of course. If we humans shared a common ancestry with apes—and if we got here by dint of the same trial-and-error slog as every other species on Earth—then so much for our being God's favorites, lovingly crafted in his image. And, yes, over time Darwin rejected a literal reading of the Bible, concluding that, as a history text, it was "no more to be trusted than the sacred books of the Hindoos, or the beliefs of any barbarian."

But Darwin also recognized that his vaunted theory of evolution was dumb on the all-important question of creation—the mystery of what set the universe in motion and what force or forces launched life on its magnificent, ever-branching trajectory. Was that God's work? Might He yet exist?

As with matrimony, Darwin rigorously considered the matter. On the positive side, it certainly felt like something divine was afoot. But he appreciated that this was a subjective and perhaps untrustworthy measure. The "immense amount of suffering through the world"—not least of which his own, highlighted by the death of his 10-year-old daughter—argued against a benevolent creator, he wrote (with Facebook-like fanaticism, he maintained a correspondence with some 2,000 friends, including 200 clergymen). At the same time, he hedged, it seemed foolish to reject the assertions of so many intellectually "able men" who "fully believed in God."

In the end, he did what any reasonable person might do: He punted. "The safest conclusion seems to be that the whole subject is beyond the scope of man's intellect," Darwin concluded. Do heaven and hell exist, and does eternal life follow death? "Every man," he wrote, "must judge for himself, between conflicting vague probabilities."

Darwin's humility in the face of insufficient evidence—his willingness to say "I don't know"—is as important a lesson as any to be found in biology texts today. This is not about "teaching the controversy"—Darwin had a slam-dunk in his explanation of the evolution of species, including humans, and every modern test of evolutionary theory has only strengthened his conclusions. But he also knew there is plenty of room for God at the top, upstream of the business of biology.

Soldiers in today's culture wars, whether in black collars or white lab coats, could take a tip from Darwin on his birthday bicentennial. He loved the natural world, "most beautiful and most wonderful." And he knew enough to not pick fights over what he did not know.

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LAND OWNERSHIP CONTROL STIFLES GROWTH, DEV'T

Land ownership a critical component of any investment

By JOSE S. DELA CRUZ
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Third of a six-part series

When an investor (local or foreign) plans to invest capital in a particular place, he wants to get the most out of his investment. Investors invest money on different types of business endeavors, such as hotel ventures, manufacturing plants, or golf courses. Depending on the business endeavor, an investor also wants to have some security on his investment. In addition, he wants to make sure that there is enough available manpower to do the work needed for his business venture. For a hotel, for example, many of its manpower needs do not require much technical expertise or skill, and a one-to-three month training program is usually all that is needed to train clerical and non-clerical workers, like front desk clerks, cooks and kitchen helpers, chamber maids, gardeners, receptionists and so forth. The economic factor of manpower availability (i.e. an adequate labor pool) for the visitor industry has not been a problem for investors in the CNMI. (It may be a problem if the new federal immigrations regulations do not address this need.) So with capital furnished by the investor, and with labor availability assured by the CNMI, the next important ingredient needed by investors is land.

Land is one of the critical components for economic development and growth. For long-term investments in general, but especially for certain types of investment (such as hotel development, real estate developments for houses, apartment complexes and commercial buildings), fee simple ownership of land by the investor is usually a given. The reason for this is because, under a leasehold arrangement, the value of the investment depreciates as the leasehold interest decreases. Unlike fee simple ownership, which ordinarily appreciates in value over time (unless, of course, there is a general decline in the real estate market), a leasehold interest, by its very nature, depreciates in value as the term of a leasehold becomes shorter. A real estate investor, therefore, clearly prefers an investment where he has a fee simple interest in the land on which his investment stands. The obvious reason for this, as just noted, is that the value of the property and his investment would generally appreciate over time, not depreciate.

To be continued.

The algorithm of love

By KEVIN HASSETT
Special to The Washington Post

Hassett is director of economic policy studies and a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. He met his match in economics class and has been married to her for 22 years.

My grandmother spent her whole youth hearing that she should stay away from strange men. Then she went and married one. But our family had a secret: She was a little strange, too. The two of them together were perfection.

Great matches have inspired philosophy and verse for as long as we have possessed charcoal to scratch with. But before a match can be celebrated, it has to happen. How do people do it? How do they sort through all the potential mates and find their true loves?

So often, it seems impossible. But to an economist, the most striking characteristic of sublime matches is that they are ubiquitous, in both society and nature. In fact, if Easter has the bunny, then Valentine's Day should have the albatross.

Like humans, albatrosses often mate for life, but only after a lengthy period of awkward dancing. They nest on remote oceanic islands, where their hatchlings take up to 10 months to mature. The birds can live more than 50 years, and a nesting pair will return to the same site year after year. But when one of them dies, a funny thing happens: The surviving partner will often find a new partner that has also lost its mate.

A large brooding colony has hundreds and hundreds of, shall we say, chicks, so you have to wonder: Exactly how do these birds find one another? How do they sort through all the possible matches and find such perfect partners?

As daunting as that challenge may seem, the fact is that humans face a much steeper hurdle. If you're not a numbers person, you might not have noticed how awe-inspiring the matching problem is.

There are approximately 6.7 billion people on earth. But finding your perfect mate is not as simple as evaluating the attractiveness of each world citizen one by one. Their feelings matter, too. A relationship worthy of song only happens when you are the best possible match for your mate, and he is the best possible match for you.

That little qualification makes the marriage problem almost unfathomable. The number of possible pairs of two in a population of 6.7 billion is very, very large, and an omniscient observer could find the best partners only by inspecting each and every possible match. There are 28 million times more possible romantic matches among people in this world than there are stars in the Milky Way. If God spent a minute evaluating each match before assigning people their spouses, the procedure would take 21.4 trillion years to complete. By then, the chocolates would be stale.

So how does it work?

Economists have made a science of studying the mechanisms humans have developed over time to achieve good matches. The pioneering work was published in 1962 by David Gale and Lloyd Shapley and was titled "College Admissions and the Stability of Marriage." They explored the question of whether a population of men and women could be sorted into stable "marriages"—that is, pairings that would not be dissolved by defection. A marriage would dissolve if there were alternative interested partners whom each spouse would prefer to their own.

The revolutionary accomplishment of Gale and Shapley is that they proved that a simple algorithm could produce a stable set of matches that assign everyone a spouse. You might say that they proved with math that there is someone for everyone.

The algorithm, which was a purely theoretical construct, is simple and eerily reminiscent of historical social convention. Suppose that we put 10 men and 10 women, all heterosexual, in a room. The Gale-Shapley algorithm would assign their mates as follows: The men line up and, one by one, propose to their favorite woman. The women can either reject the proposal or defer it until the next round by becoming "engaged." In the next round, each unengaged fellow tries again with his next favorite woman. A woman who was previously engaged can ditch her fiance and become engaged to her new suitor if she wishes. The game continues until everyone is engaged, at which point, in cult-like fashion, everyone is married all at once.

The beauty of the approach is that it distributes people into stable matches. But there is a dark side to it as well. A matching game that proceeds with men signaling their interest and women choosing from among their suitors seems as though it gives women the power. But in fact, it does the reverse. Since each man proposes to the women starting with his most favorite and continuing through lesser choices, he is eventually matched with the woman who is his most favorite among the set of all women who would have him. The opposite is true for the women, whose most favorite men may not ever even propose to them.

Compared to the real world, there's also a little sleight of hand here. We began by placing 20 people in a room. Perhaps the biggest challenge is getting people into the room in the first place.

Since Gale and Shapley wrote, the literature identifying the methods we use to reduce the set of possible partners has grown enormously. The basic idea is, again, a simple one: We develop signals that we send one another to help us narrow the search.

A well known example in the economics community illustrates the function of such signals. Muriel Niederle is a renowned game theorist at Stanford. The dating Web site Cupid.com recently asked her to help solve a common problem: Women were being inundated by offers from men, which made it difficult for them to find good matches.

Niederle offered up a solution: Cupid.com should give each man two electronic roses per month to send to two women of his choice, along with an introductory note. Since the men were only allowed to send two roses, women found that they were choosing from a much better and smaller pool of candidates. Cupid.com chief executive Eric Straus told the Wall Street Journal that this approach improved a suitor's chances of success by 35 percent. This simple insight, of course, only replicates in electronic form the ritual that males of many species have followed since the dawn of time. A costly gift is a valuable signal.

That striking increase in the matching success rate is notable, because people presumably resorted to the dating service in the first place thinking that it was a better option than the bar or the water cooler. In other words, society as a whole is clearly not doing a good job at providing signaling opportunities.

But as albatrosses can attest, good signals make all the difference. The wild gesticulations of the albatross are not so much a dance as a language, and researchers report that old couples develop their own unique one over time. Widows probably find widowers in a crowded colony because birds signal their sad status to one another by performing half a dance.

Which brings us to Valentine's Day.

When I was very young, it was the practice at school for each child to give a valentine to all his classmates. Since everyone received a valentine, they provided no signal. Given our age, that was irrefutably a good thing. As we grew older, valentines dwindled and disappeared. As adults, it seems that most people who receive valentines have already found their matches.

But if you consider how difficult matching is, then you have to conclude that Valentine's Day has become an enormous missed opportunity. People have an almost impossible task in finding a mate. Society can do a better job of providing opportunities for them to signal interest in one another. We can start with Feb. 14. If every unattached person selected a few individuals they might be interested in and sent them a valentine, the literature suggests that it would significantly improve the quality of matches, just as a simple electronic rose launched thousands of Cupid's online arrows.

In addition to smoothing the matching process, a Valentine's Day revival would have a second effect. If both sexes signaled equally, then the whole process would no longer be slanted in favor of men.

This can begin only if a sufficient mass of citizens decides to start a new tradition. As albatrosses know, each would-be signaler needs the cover of a raucous colony.

Valentine's Day is today. Get moving. You still have time to send a few valentines.

Who knows, you might even end up as lucky as my grandfather.

Letter to the Editor

A very big thank you

I believe this is an overdue statement to give special thanks and kudos to all the people involved in spearheading the National Forensic League, Thespian, Mathcounts and other various school competitions.

Allow me to extend my deepest appreciation to the entire Public School System and private institutions involved one way or the other in making these competitions alive and successful. As a parent who is also involved in these events, I can testify that my child gained a lot from winning and representing our island to compete in the national level.

It's not just the parents who are proud of their children's achievements but also the schools they represent as well as the island community. With the talents of our school children, I humbly request PSS, parents, organizers and the schools to continue these endeavors.

Also, let me extend my sincerest thanks to Messrs. Thornburg, Smith and Ms. Norman as well as the entire PSS in collaboration with their schools for allowing the organizers and students to conduct these events, with the full support of the Commissioners, board members, school principals and especially the teachers, past and present, who unselfishly devote their time and effort to make this happen.

Some people in particular I don't want to miss thanking, especially,Mr. Harold Easton of Marianas High School, Mr. Andrew Golden of Southern High and especially to the judges who participated in various competitions, past and present, and who gladly commit and voluntarily give their time and effort.

Lastly, to all the parents who support their children and are always there watching the events unfold, I salute them all. Whether the students make it or not to the top, you are still the best. Do not give up easily. Always focus on whatever you plan to achieve. It will need perseverance, hard work, patience and most of all you must love what you do and I can say you will succeed in the future.

J.T. Liwanag
via- e-mail

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. East winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲84° ▼74°	▲87° ▼76°	▲86° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

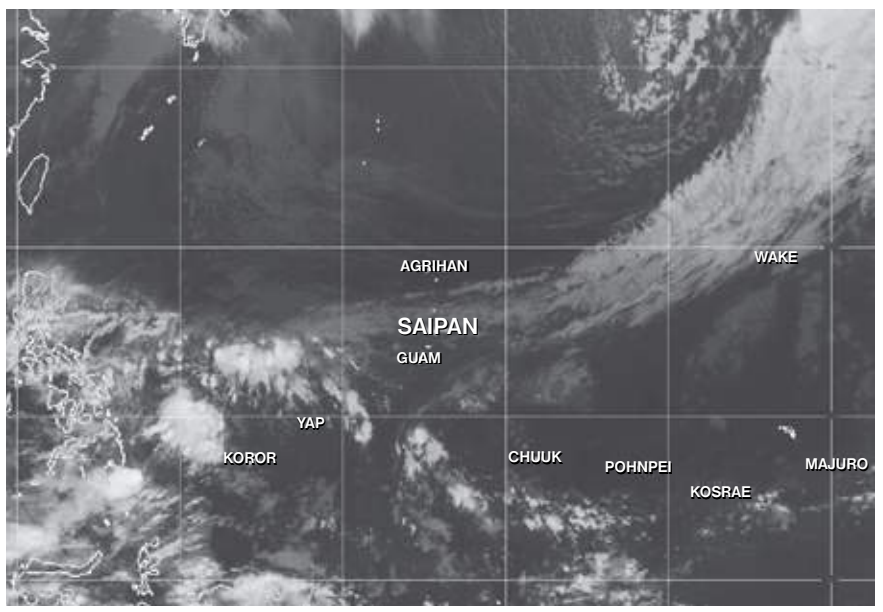
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Windy	▲84	▼73
Palau	Showers	▲86	▼78
Yap	Showers	▲85	▼77
Chuuk	Sunny	▲89	▼79
Pohnpei	Sunny	▲87	▼76
Kosrae	Rain	▲86	▼78
Majuro	Cloudy	▲84	▼76

Around The Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲68	▼55
Beijing	Cloudy	▲45	▼19
Hong Kong	Mostly Cloudy	▲77	▼70
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲77	▼70
London	Cloudy	▲43	▼39
Los Angeles	Cloudy	▲60	▼46
Manila	Showers	▲90	▼74
Melbourne	Sunny	▲77	▼61
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲82	▼65
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲40	▼30
Osaka	Showers	▲59	▼42
Paris	Cloudy	▲40	▼36
Pusan	Sunny	▲59	▼41
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲43	▼25
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲45	▼31
San Francisco	Rain	▲54	▼47
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲37	▼17
Tokyo	Showers	▲62	▼46
Washington, DC	Rain	▲44	▼31

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, FRIDAY, FEB. 13, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends southwestward from 25N170E to 18N160Ethen continues as a shear line across Guam to beyond 130E at 11N. Cloudiness and scattered light showers are found along and up to 300 miles northwest of the cold front. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are occurring along and up to 150 miles northwest of the shear line. A near-equatorial trough runs southeastward from 8N130E to 5N140E to EQ147E. Strong upper-level divergent winds are combining with low-level west winds south of Koror to produce scattered showers and a few thunderstorms between 3N and 6N from 135E to 138E. Also scattered showers are found near Yap between 7N and 10N from 136E to 139E. Low-level convergence is producing scattered showers south of Pohnpei and Chuuk between the equator and 4N from 152E to 158E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
4:47 AM Today	Low Tide:	0.5 Feet
10:45 AM Today	High Tide:	2.0 Feet
5:39 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
11:37 PM Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:42 AM	6:20 PM
Sunday	6:42 AM	6:21 PM
Monday	6:41 AM	6:21 PM
Tuesday	6:41 AM	6:21 PM
Wednesday	6:40 AM	6:22 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	10:36 PM	9:38 AM
Sunday	11:29 PM	10:19 AM
Monday		11:02 AM
Tuesday	12:22 AM	11:47 AM
Wednesday	1:15 AM	12:35 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

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SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $182. Off-island subscription rate is $376 per year. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2009

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am	Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily
Guam-Narita			
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm	Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am	1,4,6
NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
Guam-Osaka			
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am	Daily
Guam-Nagoya			
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Incheon			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am	1,4,6 via Osaka
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am	1,4,5,7
Saipan-Shanghai			
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6
Rota-Guam			
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7
Guam-Palau			
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm	1,7
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm	3,5
Palau-Manila			
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm	3,5
Guam-Manila			
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7
Nagoya-Manila			
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm	Daily
Incheon-Hongkong			
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm	Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm	Daily
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm	5,7
Narita-Manila			
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm	Daily

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:20am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 100	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Narita-Guam			
NW 74	9:45am	2:20pm	Daily
NW 82	10:30am	3:10pm	Daily
Osaka-Saipan			
OZ 120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7
NW 084	10:40am	3:05pm	Daily
Osaka-Guam			
NW 80	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	9:00pm	1:20am+1	Daily
Nagoya-Guam			
NW 24	10:00am	2:30pm	Daily
Incheon-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7 via Osaka
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3,4,6,7
Shanghai-Saipan			
FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6
Palau-Guam			
CO 954	2:30am	5:25am	1,2
CO 892	2:35am	5:30am	4,6
Manila-Palau			
CO 892	10:10pm	1:50am+1	3,5
Manila-Guam			
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Manila-Nagoya			
NW 72	6:30am	11:05am	Daily
Hongkong-Incheon			
OZ 724	12:30am	4:50am	Daily
OZ 7183	12:45am	5:05am	1,4,6
OZ 722	1:30pm	5:45pm	Daily
Manila-Narita			
NW 2	7:45am	12:40pm	Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio

Sunday		
	9am	Sunday school
	10am	Regular worship
	6pm	worship
Wednesday		
	7pm	worship

Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries

Sunday	5:30am-6:30am	
Morning prayer		
	7am-9am	English service
	7am-9am	Sunday school
	10am-12noon	English service, Koblerville
Wednesday	7pm-9pm	Prayer meeting
Saturday	7pm-9pm	Tagalog service

Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

FEBRUARY 14, 2000

Land issues seal disapproval of free trade zones

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has tossed back to the Legislature a legislation seeking to establish free trade zones in the Northern Marianas due to the administration-sponsored bill's failure to address issues surrounding the use of public lands. "Issues regarding public lands have recently been identified and must be addressed in order to ensure the integrity of Commonwealth free trade zones once established," Mr. Tenorio told legislators in a Feb. 10, 2000 letter. He also noted changes made by the 11th Legislature to the original draft, including a provision which places control of large tracts of land under the control of Tinian and Rota mayors.

Gov't spent less on office rental expenses

The Department of Finance on Friday reported that the CNMI government managed to reduce by close to 16 percent its office rental expenses in Fiscal 1999 from the 1997 level. In 1997, government leases of private sector office space totaled $2.3 million which was down by $400,000, or 15.5 percent, to $1.9 million last year, a DOF report showed. Only the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs reported an increase but officials attribute this to the need for "safe houses" for battered and abused individuals and related family issue programs. Finance officials ascribe the reduction to the relocation of more government offices to the Capitol Hill housing area. At least 30 government agencies now occupy 30 of the 105 housing units in Capitol Hill.

FEBRUARY 14, 2001

CUC officials in hot water

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is facing a possible investigation by the Office of the Public Auditor following allegations of breach of fiduciary duties of its officials, ranging from excessive off-island trips to uncalled-for hiring of new personnel. Some members of the Legislature yesterday bared concrete plans to ask OPA to extensively investigate and evaluate the financial status of the government-owned utility corporation This, following reports of excessive travel tabs incurred by CUC officials, continued hiring of personnel, implementation of across-the-board wage increase and additional $1,000 anniversary salary hike, amid what the firm called were "austerity measures."

Measures to ensure safety of Managaha tourists eyed

Local leaders are poised at instituting more stringent security measures that would keep sinister elements from harming any more tourists who hop to the Managaha Island for fun and relaxation activities. This, after an unfortunate mauling incident involving a Japanese tourist occurred on the remote island over the weekend, which leaders perceive as an assault to the local tourism industry. The 28-year-old lady victim had to be transported to the local hospital for severe facial injuries. Rep. Malua Peter disclosed the leadership's plan to introduce a House resolution that would establish a fortified system of protection for tourists bound for the island west of Saipan.

FEBRUARY 14, 2002

'BB violates own austerity'

The thin veneer of politeness between Gov. Juan N. Babauta and Personnel Officer Norbert Sablan that masked low-level tension over gubernatorial appointments has just gone kaput. Concerns raised by Sablan over the proposed salary level for two ranking gubernatorial appointees has apparently raised the hackles of Babauta, who pointed out to Sablan that the personnel actions are not in violation of any laws or regulations. Sablan told the Governor, however, that he would be remiss "if I did not advise you that the salaries that you are establishing for some of the positions in the Office of the Governor and to the executive department heads contradict the message of austerity that you have expressed to government employees and the public."

Supreme Court disbars Rhodes

The Supreme Court issued yesterday an order banning former Assistant Public Defender Douglas William Rhodes from further practicing law in the Northern Marianas, following the lawyer's confession that he was convicted of a felony in Michigan in the late 1970s. Rhodes, who reportedly left the island last week, admitted to the high court during a February 6, 2002 closed hearing that he "robbed a gas station at knife point in the City of Adrian, Michigan in 1978." For the said offense, he was convicted and sentenced to six months imprisonment and five years probation.

Business

Retail rises unexpectedly in Jan.

NEW YORK (AP)—Americans bought a sweater or two, ate out a little more, purchased some gadgets and turned to the Internet in search of bargains in January. These small indulgences nevertheless provided some relief to suffering stores, boosting retail sales by 1 percent.

The unexpected increase from December, reported by the Commerce Department on Thursday, reversed a six-month decline and marked the biggest increase in 14 months.

But it's far too early to break out the champagne. With nearly 5 million Americans still drawing unemployment benefits late last month and the specter of more layoffs to come, economists believe the reversal is unlikely to last. In a sign of how fearful businesses are, they slashed inventories in December by the biggest amount in seven years—potentially triggering further cutbacks in production and more layoffs.

Clearly, however, any lift in spending is worth watching.

"Consumers began to treat themselves a little better," said Joel Naroff, president and chief economist at Naroff Economic Advisors Inc.

Whether this is a sign of a thaw in consumer spending or a blip, he said he won't know for another few months. But he said consumers, shell-shocked since the financial meltdown in September, may be moving from "doing nothing to doing a little something."

"I am not saying that people are going to love the recession, but people are going to learn to live with it," Naroff said.

The January figures were far better than the 0.8 percent decline that economists surveyed by Thomson Reuters expected.

"This is a big surprise, though the net rise in sales is less impressive than it looks because (December and November) were revised down by 0.3 percent each," Ian Shepherdson, chief U.S. economist at High Frequency Economics, wrote in a research note. "The headline relief today is welcome but it is unlikely to last."

Retail sales had plunged a revised 3 percent in December, which marked the weakest holiday season in several decades. Last week, the retail industry reported a 1.6 percent decline in same-store sales in January compared with a year earlier, according to the International Council of Shopping Centers-Goldman Sachs index. That figure—while grim—wasn't as bad as the 2 to 3 percent drop that the group expected.

The Commerce Department report showed strong increases in sales of automobiles and in general merchandise stores—the "big box" outlets—though sales by department stores, carrying fewer varieties of items, posted a small decline.

Wal-Mart Stores Inc., the world's largest retailer, is one discounter that has benefited from consumers' focus on necessities like groceries and on bargains for other items. Still, even some categories of more discretionary items enjoyed increases. Clothing and accessories stores posted a 1.6 percent gain, while electronics and appliances rose 2.6 percent.

But shoppers still cut back on furniture and building materials and garden supplies. Furniture and home furnishings sales fell 1.3 percent, while building material sales dropped 3.2 percent.

Sales at gas stations jumped 2.6 percent in January—the biggest increase since June, while sales of autos and parts rose 1.6 percent.

Michael P. Niemira, the ICSC's chief economist, said that rising gas prices didn't boost the figures much. Excluding gas sales, retail sales still rose 0.9 percent. So he believes that the little post-holiday shopping that people did was magnified by a horrendous December.

Nonstore retailers, such as Internet and mail-order shopping, rose 2.7 percent in January, while sales of food and beverages rose 2.1 percent. Health and personal care stores registered flat sales.

Despite the overall leap last month, retail sales were down 9.7 percent from January 2008, amid the ravages of the recession, thousands of job losses and falling home prices.

The Labor Department report Thursday showed just how weak the job market remains. While the number of initial jobless claims dropped to a seasonally adjusted 623,000 from a revised figure of 631,000 the previous week, the latest tally still higher than expected.

And in a sign that laid-off employees are having difficulty finding new work, the number of people claiming benefits for more than one week rose to 4.81 million from 4.78 million, the highest total since records began in 1967. That data lag new claims figures by a week.

An additional 1.5 million people are receiving unemployment benefits under an extended program approved last year, bringing the total number of recipients to 6.3 million.

Against this backdrop, many of the nation's retailers are slashing jobs. Macy's Inc. said last week it will eliminate 7,000 jobs, or almost 4 percent of its work force, while Bon-Ton Stores Inc. and apparel maker Liz Claiborne Inc. also disclosed major job cuts.

Even Wal-Mart said Tuesday it will cut 700 to 800 jobs at its Arkansas headquarters as it builds fewer new stores this year and makes other operational changes. The cuts are coming in Wal-Mart's real estate, apparel, and health and wellness departments.

Nation

Winds knock out power to thousands on East Coast

By POLLY ANDERSON
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

Wild winds with gusts topping 60 mph blew from the Great Lakes to the East Coast on Thursday, knocking out power to hundreds of thousands of customers, disrupting travel and killing at least five people.

The high winds, attributed to a strong low pressure system, started Wednesday night and moved east overnight, kicking up gravel and sand from construction sites and hurling garbage cans onto busy New York City streets on Thursday.

"I got more sand in my eyes than a beach, and I almost got blown over backwards," said electrician Michael Lazzaro, who ducked into a bar on his way home from work in New York.

Utilities such as Jersey Central Power & Light in New Jersey reported downed power lines from wind-snapped trees. About 250,000 customers remained without power Thursday in Pennsylvania, and 140,000 more in Ohio. There were also about 109,000 outages in West Virginia, more than 35,000 in New Jersey and 14,900 in Michigan.

AP

Graduate student Nikki Allem of Canton, OH uses her umbrella to block the gusting wind and rain as she makes her way to her first class of the morning at Syracuse University in Syracuse, N.Y. on Thursday Feb. 12, 2009.

"This is one of the largest power outages we've seen in many years," said Jimmy Gianato, West Virginia's director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. At one point, 220,000 customers were without power. At least six state parks also had no electricity.

Utilities in Ohio and West Virginia said electricity wouldn't be restored to some residents until the weekend or later.

In New Jersey, a 61-year-old motorist was killed early Thursday in Union County when a tree snapped, crashing through her car's windshield and impaling the woman. A woman in Newark died of massive head injuries after a tree branch fell and struck her Thursday afternoon. Another woman attending her brother's wake in West Virginia was struck and killed by debris when the church's gymnasium collapsed Wednesday night.

A 35-year-old truck driver also died Wednesday night near Columbus, Ohio, when wind knocked a semitrailer into his truck. Police said three other semitrailers were knocked over by wind Wednesday night, injuring one of the drivers.

Lawmakers say all issues settled in stimulus bill

WASHINGTON (AP)—Reluctant to call it quits, key lawmakers bargained into overtime Thursday on the $790 billion economic stimulus legislation before reaching final agreement more than 24 hours after first announcing a deal. Lingering controversy over school-modernization money and a scaled-back tax break for businesses forced a delay in final votes on the legislation. But by nightfall, with Democratic leaders eager for final passage by the weekend, all issues were reported settled.

House leaders announced a vote for Friday, with the Senate to follow later in the day or over the weekend.

Republicans, lined up to vote against the bill, piled on the scorn. "This is not the smart approach," said Sen. Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the Republican leader. "The taxpayers of today and tomorrow will be left to clean up the mess."

President Barack Obama delivered what has become a daily call for congressional action, this time from the industrial heartland. With approval of the bill, he said in Peoria, Ill., companies "may be able to start growing again. Rather than cutting jobs, they may be able to create them again."

He spoke at Caterpillar Inc., the heavy machinery giant that has announced 22,000 layoffs. The president has said in recent days the company has promised to rescind some of them once the stimulus passes, but Chief Executive Jim Owens said there probably would be more layoffs before that can occur.

At the Capitol and in an atmosphere of uncertainty, provisions were coming to light that had not been included in the original bills that passed the House or Senate—or that differed markedly from earlier versions, or that appeared to brush up against claims of the bill's supporters that no pet projects known as "earmarks" were included.

Gay couples protest at marriage bureaus across US

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Same-sex couples seeking to wed showed up at marriage license counters nationwide Thursday to highlight a right they don't have in 48 states, part of an annual protest that took on renewed urgency given recent election setbacks.

In San Francisco, where same-sex marriage was legal for nearly five months last year before California voters approved a ban, many couples who came to City Hall had already tied the knot but wanted to express their gratitude and to show they're still part of the fight.

"All of our marriages are under the cloud of Proposition 8," said Stuart Gaffney, 45, referring to California's ballot initiative banning gay marriage. "Equality is an unfinished business in California."

In Las Vegas, couples gathered outside the downtown marriage bureau with signs that read "Don't hate my love" and "No laws on love." In New York, activists wore signs that said "Just Not Married." They were turned away empty-handed in both places when they asked for marriage licenses.

"We could get married in Massachusetts or Connecticut, but we'll wait a little and see what happens in New York," Matt Flanders, 37, of Brooklyn, said after he and his partner, Will Jennings, 29, participated in the protest in Manhattan. "It's a matter of principle. This is our home, and we should be able to get married where we live, where our friends are."

The protests around Valentine's Day, part of the 12th annual Freedom to Marry Day, were considered especially important this year because they come after the November passage of Proposition 8. The measure has prompted protests, lawsuits and questions about the direction of the gay rights movement.

"A lot of people feel a sense of determination and regret over having been too complacent or quiet before, so there is a commitment to, `Never again, we have to take action,'" said Evan Wolfson, a civil rights lawyer who conceived Freedom to Marry Day. "In that sense, California was a terrific energizer and wake-up call."

Gregg withdraws as commerce secretary nominee

WASHINGTON (AP)—Saying "I made a mistake," Republican Sen. Judd Gregg of New Hampshire abruptly withdrew as commerce secretary nominee on Thursday and left the fledgling White House suddenly coping with Barack Obama's third Cabinet withdrawal. Gregg cited "irresolvable conflicts" with Obama's policies, specifically mentioning the $790 billion economic stimulus bill and 2010 census in a statement released without warning by his Senate office.

Later, at a news conference in the Capitol, he sounded more contrite.

"The president asked me to do it," he said of the job offer. "I said, yes. That was my mistake."

Obama offered a somewhat different account from Gregg.

"It comes as something of a surprise, because the truth, you know, Mr. Gregg approached us with interest and seemed enthusiastic," Obama said in an interview with the Springfield (Ill.) Journal-Register.

Later, he told reporters traveling with him on Air Force One that he was glad Gregg "searched his heart" and changed course now before the Senate confirmed him to the Cabinet post. He also said Gregg's withdrawal won't deter him from working with Republicans and trying to change the partisan ways of Washington.

"Clearly he was just having second thoughts about leaving the Senate, a place where he's thrived," Obama added.

ACROSS THE NATION

LA police to investigate threats to octuplet mom

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Police said Thursday they will investigate death threats against octuplet mom Nadya Suleman and advise her publicist on how to handle a torrent of other nasty messages that have flooded his office. Word that the 33-year-old single, unemployed mother is receiving public assistance to care for the 14 children she conceived through in vitro fertilization has stoked furor among many people. Police Lt. John Romero said officers were meeting with Suleman's publicist Mike Furtney about the flood of angry phone calls and e-mail messages against Suleman, her children and Furtney. "We are aware of the media accounts of the threats, and that they are being sent to the West Los Angeles detectives for appropriate action," Romero said. Furtney said 500 new e-mails were received early Thursday.

Victim dragged under van identified as Ecuadorean

NEW YORK (AP)—The man who was hit by a car, trapped under a van and dragged for nearly 20 miles through the city was a hardworking immigrant who religiously sent money home to his wife and daughter in Ecuador, relatives said Thursday. Guido Salvador Carabajo-Jara turned 26 the day before he was killed in Wednesday's gruesome accident. He was crossing a busy street near his home in Queens when he was hit by an SUV, then impaled by a steel plate under a second vehicle, a van. His body wasn't discovered until the van driver arrived in Brooklyn about an hour later. His sister, Rosa Carabajo, and his cousin Felix Jara returned to their Queens neighborhood Thursday from the hospital morgue, weeping and distressed.

TX officials order Peanut Corp. to recall products

DALLAS (AP)—Texas health officials ordered the recall Thursday of peanut products from a plant operated by the company at the center of a national salmonella outbreak, days after tests indicated the likely presence of the bacteria there. Peanut Corp. of America was ordered to recall all products ever shipped from its plant in Plainview after the Texas Department of State Health Services said it found dead rodents, rodent excrement and bird feathers in a crawl space above a production area on Wednesday. Health Department spokesman Doug McBride said it was up to Peanut Corp. to inform its clients around the country of the recall. It wasn't immediately clear if the company was complying: Phone messages seeking comment from the company weren't returned, and no information regarding the Texas action was posted on the company's site.

World

Crash of US, Russian satellites a threat in space

MOSCOW (AP)—U.S. and Russian officials traded shots Thursday over who was to blame for a huge satellite collision this week that spewed speeding clouds of debris into space, threatening other unmanned spacecraft in nearby orbits.

The smashup 500 miles (800 kilometers) over Siberia on Tuesday involved a derelict Russian spacecraft designed for military communications and a working satellite owned by U.S.-based Iridium, which served commercial customers as well as the U.S. Department of Defense.

A prominent Russian space expert suggested NASA fell down on the job by not warning of the collision. But U.S. space experts said the Russian has the wrong agency.

The U.S. military tracks the 18,000 objects in orbit, monitoring only certain threats because it lacks the resources to do everything, said Maj. Regina Winchester, spokeswoman for U.S. Strategic Command, which oversees the military's Space Surveillance Network.

Iridium spokeswoman Elizabeth Mailander said the company can move any of its 65 satellites out of the way if it gets a precise warning ahead of a crash. Such a warning was not made Tuesday, Mailander said.

AP

This image provided by the European Space Agency shows artist impression of catalogued objects in low-Earth orbit viewed over the Equator.

Report: NKorea assembling long-range missile

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea appears to be assembling its most advanced long-range missile and could conduct a test launch this month, a newspaper reported Friday, amid U.S. and South Korean warnings against disturbing regional stability.

The Taepodong-2 missile has recently been moved to the east coast Musudan-ni missile site, but has not yet been seen near the launch pad, the mass-circulation Chosun Ilbo reported, citing an unidentified South Korean government official.

"We assume that they are currently assembling the first and second-stage rockets," the newspaper quoted the official as saying.

WORLD BRIEFS

Report: Man charged with arson in Australia fire

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP)—A media report says a suspect has been charged with lighting one of the wildfires that killed more than 180 people in Australia last weekend. Australian Broadcasting Corp. reported Friday that the man was charged in court on three counts: arson causing death, lighting a wildfire and with possession of child pornography. The report cites no sources. The man did not appear in the Morwell Magistrates Court, where he was ordered to undergo psychiatric evaluation. The arson charges are connected to a blaze known as the Churchill fire, one of hundreds that raged through southeastern Victoria state last Saturday, killing more than 181 people and destroying almost 2,000 homes.

Moderate party holds edge in final Israeli count

JERUSALEM (AP)—The Kadima Party of moderate Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni kept its slight lead over Benjamin Netanyahu's hawkish Likud in final election results announced Thursday, but the hard-line bloc in Israel's new parliament will have the power to stymie Mideast peace efforts. Kadima will get 28 seats in the 120-seat parliament and Likud 27, far less than the 61-seat majority needed to govern alone. Livni and Netanyahu are already hard at work trying to line up potential partners for a governing coalition. Israel's Election Commission released the final results after counting votes by soldiers, prisoners and diplomats, about 100,000 out of a total of 3.3 million cast. The additional votes did not change the allocation of parliament seats tallied after the Tuesday election. The hawkish bloc headed by Likud, including the new No. 3 party, Avigdor Lieberman's Yisrael Beitenu, controls 65 seats, giving Netanyahu the edge in coalition building. But each party has its own agenda, and getting them all to sit around the same Cabinet table is far from automatic.

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PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, February 14, 2009

OFWs in Europe vs hike in passport fees

By VERONICA UY
INQUIRER.NET

Overseas Filipino workers in Europe, particularly in Italy, are protesting the increase in the cost of passport and other consular fees imposed by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the group Migrante-Europe said Friday.

In an e-mail sent to media outfits, Migrante-Europe's Alex Gregorio said protest actions are being planned against the increase, which he quoted the DFA as saying is due to the "drastic drop in the local currencies vis-à-vis the United States dollar."

DFA spokesman Bayani Mangibin agreed that foreign currency adjustment is one of the reasons for the effective increase, which was originally scheduled November 2008 but became effective January 2009.

Quoting Philippine Ambassador to Italy Philippe Lhuillier, Mangibin said the other reason for the effective increase is the increased cost of the machine readable passport, the new travel document required by the International Civil Aviation Organization.

The DFA spokesman said that compared to the embassies of other Asian countries, the cost of Philippine passports is lower.

Gregorio said the protest actions are being spearheaded by the Lampada-United OFWs in Italy. He said various Filipino groups from Rome, Milan, Bologna, Firenze, and Mantova will meet toward the last week of the February to further firm up the plans to pressure theArroyo government and the DFA to repeal the memorandum that effectively raised consular services of Philippine diplomatic posts in Europe.

He said other Filipino groups in the United Kingdom, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, and The Netherlands are also studying the new increases.

In an open letter to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Lampada-United OFWs in Italy called the increase "arbitrary, anomalous, undemocratic and unjust since we were not informed neither consulted prior to its approval."

The OFWs in Italy also said the recent increases have further aggravated their financial situation, given the uncertainties and other effects of the global financial crisis.

18 Filipinos on freed Japanese ship

NAIROBI (AFP)—Somali pirates have released a Panama-flagged Japanese-owned ship with 18 Filipino crewmen that was hijacked in the Gulf of Aden three months ago, an organization monitoring piracy in the region said in a statement Friday.

"The MT Chemstar Venus, seajacked on 15 November 2008 was released" late Thursday, the nongovernmental group Ecoterra International said.

Aside from the Filipino, the ship also had five South Korean crewmen.

All the seafarers are unharmed.

Ecoterra said the last pirates left the ship at 10:30 p.m. (1930 GMT) after a ransom was delivered to the vessel by a tugboat.

The MT Chemstar Venus is owned and managed by the Japanese company Iino Marine and carries some 20,000 tons of oil products.

The latest release brings to at least 11 the number of foreign vessels still held by Somali pirates. A total of more than 170 seamen are held hostage.

Some 2,000 Japanese ships sail through Somali waters to cross the Suez Canal each year and the Asian giant's shipping industry has voiced alarm over the cost incurred should vessels have to opt for a safer but longer route.

Tokyo late last month ordered its navy to prepare for deployment in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean.

Japanese warships will be joining a growing fleet of foreign navies patrolling what have become the world's most dangerous waters, with more than 130 attacks by Somali pirates in 2008 alone.

Japan is restricted by its post-World War II pacifism, with domestic law allowing the navy to use force to protect only ships flying the Japanese flag or carrying Japanese passengers.

According to experts, a slightly lower rate of successful pirate attacks since the start of 2009 is due to a combination of weather conditions and increased navy surveillance.

AP

VALENTINE'S DAY STUNT

A male diver moves closer to kiss a female diver as a cupid diver waits in the background during a promotional campaign to entertain visitors at Manila's ocean park a day before Valentine's Day Friday, Feb. 13, 2009.

MIFICPA to conduct tax seminar on Feb. 21

The Marianas Institute of Filipino CPAs and Accountants will conduct a tax seminar on tax savings tips for 2008 and recent tax law updates next Saturday, Feb. 21.

The venue shall be at the Saipan Grand Hotel's Seaside Hall. Registration starts at 8am and the seminar session will start promptly at 9am up to 12noon.

Edgar T. Aguilar, manager for Tax Services of Deloitte & Touche LLP, will be the resource person for the seminar.

Participants will have the chance to raise questions on tax matters to maximize money saving measures in filing the 2008 individual and corporate tax returns.

Registration fee per participant will be $12 that covers light breakfast and participant's certificate. Seminar materials will be provided. Renewal of MIFICPA annual membership dues will be collected at $5.00 on the day of the event only. For new members, the same fee applies.

Seats are limited; so for advance reservation and for more information, contact any of the MIFICPA officers by either text or e-mail: Aileen Indino at 789-0021 (aileenrindino@yahoo.com); Melvin Malvar at 789-2101(mjmalvar@yahoo.com); Marlon Estigoy at 789-7943 (marlon@saipan.com) or Christy Villaflor at 989-9123 (villaflor_chris@yahoo.com). ***(PR)***

Undocumented OFWs can register—Comelec

By VERONICA UY
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Almost two weeks into the registration for overseas absentee voting, only 2,045 have enlisted in the 93 foreign posts as of Feb. 11, the Department of Foreign Affairs said Thursday.

At the re-launch of the registration center at the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Foreign Affairs Undersecretary for Special and Ocean Concerns Rafael Seguis said the turnout was still far from the one million target overseas registrants for the 2010 elections.

Elections Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer said 123,220 had been de-listed from the certified list of voters of some 500,000 as of 2007 after they failed to vote in the last two polls.

He said they could enlist again during the registration period, which runs until August 31 this year.

The commissioner in charge of OAV said undocumented workers, which government estimates put at almost a million, may also register.

? LABOR FRONT

Employer actions on referrals

By FERDIE PONCE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Q: After receiving a referral from Labor's Employment Services to hire a person, does an employer have the right to reject that individual?

A: According to the Regulations of the new Labor reform law, employers may reject persons who are referred by Labor's Employment Services using the employer's normal hiring criteria. The employers should indicate a short statement of reasons for such rejection to be submitted to the Employment Services.

The Regulations state that with respect to each job vacancy announcement, the Employment Services shall determine whether any person on the referral list is qualified for the vacancy. If candidates are available from the Referral List, a suitable number of qualified candidates will be referred to the employer within five working days after receipt of the proposed job vacancy announcement.

■ ■ ■

Q: What action should an employer do if the Employment Services referred more than one person to be hired?

A: In case where more than one application is referred by Employment Services, the Regulations state that any applicant referred may be hired rather than any other applicant referred without any justification indicated to be submitted to Employment Services.

Any citizen or permanent resident may be hired rather than a person referred by Employment Services without any justification required to be submitted to Employment Services.

■ ■ ■

Q: What will happen if the Employment Services fails to locate a qualified applicant for the job position?

A: According to the Regulations, an employer must make a good faith effort to hire a citizen or permanent resident for a job vacancy apart from the referral service provided by the Employment Services in the event that referral service is unsuccessful in finding a qualified applicant.

Good faith effort may include posting of the job vacancy announcement at the employer's place of business and with the Workforce Investment Agency, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the Adult Development Institution at the Public School System, the Northern Marianas College, and other suitable locations.

Good faith effort may also include publication in local newspapers, church bulletins, newsletters, and magazines.

Good faith effort also means conducting outreach for candidates from the U.S. mainland if local citizens or permanent residents are not available.

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At Senate hearing, World Bank on trial

Contractors, others on blacklist deny raps

By MICHAEL LIM UBAC, CHRISTINE AVENDAÑO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—The Senate on Thursday decided to summon the representative of the World Bank in the Philippines to show proof of purported bid rigging in road projects, in effect shifting the burden from those implicated in the corruption controversy, including President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's absent husband.

Speaking with reporters after the hearing on the "collusive practices" of three Filipino contractors that bid for the National Roads Improvement and Management Program 1 (NRIMP 1), Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said that "so far, there is no evidence against" First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo.

But Sen. Panfilo Lacson said there seemed to be something fishy about the hearing, the second conducted on the controversy by the Senate committee on economic affairs along with the committees on public works and on finance.

"It seems orchestrated, if you look at the events of the day," Lacson told reporters, adding that it was like "shooting the messenger"—in this case the World Bank, which had exposed the purported corruption in the bidding for NRIMP 1.

For much of the hearing, presided over by the iron-willed Santiago and lasting more than three hours, senators from both sides of the political fence assailed the World Bank and its officials for not furnishing the Senate a copy of the report it had given the Department of Finance (DoF) and Office of the Ombudsman as early as November 2007.

The senators also bristled at the "confidentiality clause" invoked by the World Bank in barring the DoF and the Ombudsman from "distributing" the nine-page report, or using it as evidence against personalities mentioned.

Blanket denials

With the joint committee's scrutiny focused on the World Bank, the "implicated persons," including former Representatives Prospero Pichay (Surigao del Sur), and Jerome and Jacinto Paras (Negros Occidental), as well as contractors and public works officials, were able to issue blanket denials.

The joint committee will subpoena World Bank country director Bert Hofman to attend the next hearing and to present the four documents it had issued in connection with the blacklisting of the three Filipino contractors.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile said the World Bank had a "strange procedure" because it suspected anomalies yet left it to the concerned government to obtain evidence.

"Duty demands that they come here," he said.

The joint committee will also hold next week an executive session, as suggested by Finance Secretary Margarito Teves and Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez, to decide if the Senate was bound by the World Bank's invocation of confidentiality.

In a statement issued early Thursday night, the World Bank said it "welcomed the Senate's initiative to follow up" on its findings on the Filipino contractors.

An hour on Mike A's health

Lacson had earlier shown reporters "excerpts" of the World Bank report implicating Mike Arroyo, former lawmakers and public works officials in the purported corruption, and had called for the reopening of the inquiry.

But he excused himself in the middle of Thursday's hearing, citing a long-scheduled speaking engagement with the Rotary Club of Manila. He returned past 2 p.m. to find the hearing adjourned.

Lacson expressed dissatisfaction with the way the hearing proceeded, particularly because, he said, an hour or so was spent delving on Mike Arroyo's health instead of the important question of whether there was corruption in the bidding for the World Bank-funded projects.

He also drew attention to the fact that Ms Arroyo's husband suddenly agreed to speak with reporters at St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City and assailed him for his exposés.

He lamented that the hearing served as a venue for a "bashing" of the World Bank, and observed that it was aired live by three government stations—something that, he said, "happened only now."

"Everything was expected to happen the way it happened," Lacson said.

Asked what he thought was the reason for the turn of events, he said: "To create the perception that this is nothing but persecution, and that the World Bank has nothing against these people, against the system of corruption that included the bidding."

Good faith

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano did not second-guess the joint committee's motive in assailing the World Bank instead of protesting Mike Arroyo's absence.

"I ascribe good faith to each and every senator as to how they view the World Bank," he said. "But definitely, Malacañang would like it to appear that the World Bank was biased against it, which, I think, is too early to conclude."

Cayetano said there was "unanimity" among the senators who were present in criticizing the World Bank.

"But that doesn't mean that the Senate, Ombudsman and the other agency should not pursue its own independent investigation," the senator said, adding:

"Whether or not the World Bank did a sloppy job, it does not mean we in the Philippine government should also do a sloppy job in investigating this. In the end, we will treat the World Bank report as a lead, and it's our duty to follow up on the lead."

Only 3 hours

Lacson said he was not questioning the motive of Santiago and the other senators.

But he wondered why the hearing was held for only three hours when it was normal for a Senate hearing to take until the evening particularly if it concerned big issues.

Lacson expressed hope that the inquiry would continue, and showed reporters a voluminous report containing the transcript of interviews between 50 persons and World Bank investigators looking into the alleged collusion of contractors and government officials in cornering bank-funded projects.

The report, titled "Notice of Sanctions Proceedings Part II Record of Interviews," was by the World Bank Department of Institutional Integrity.

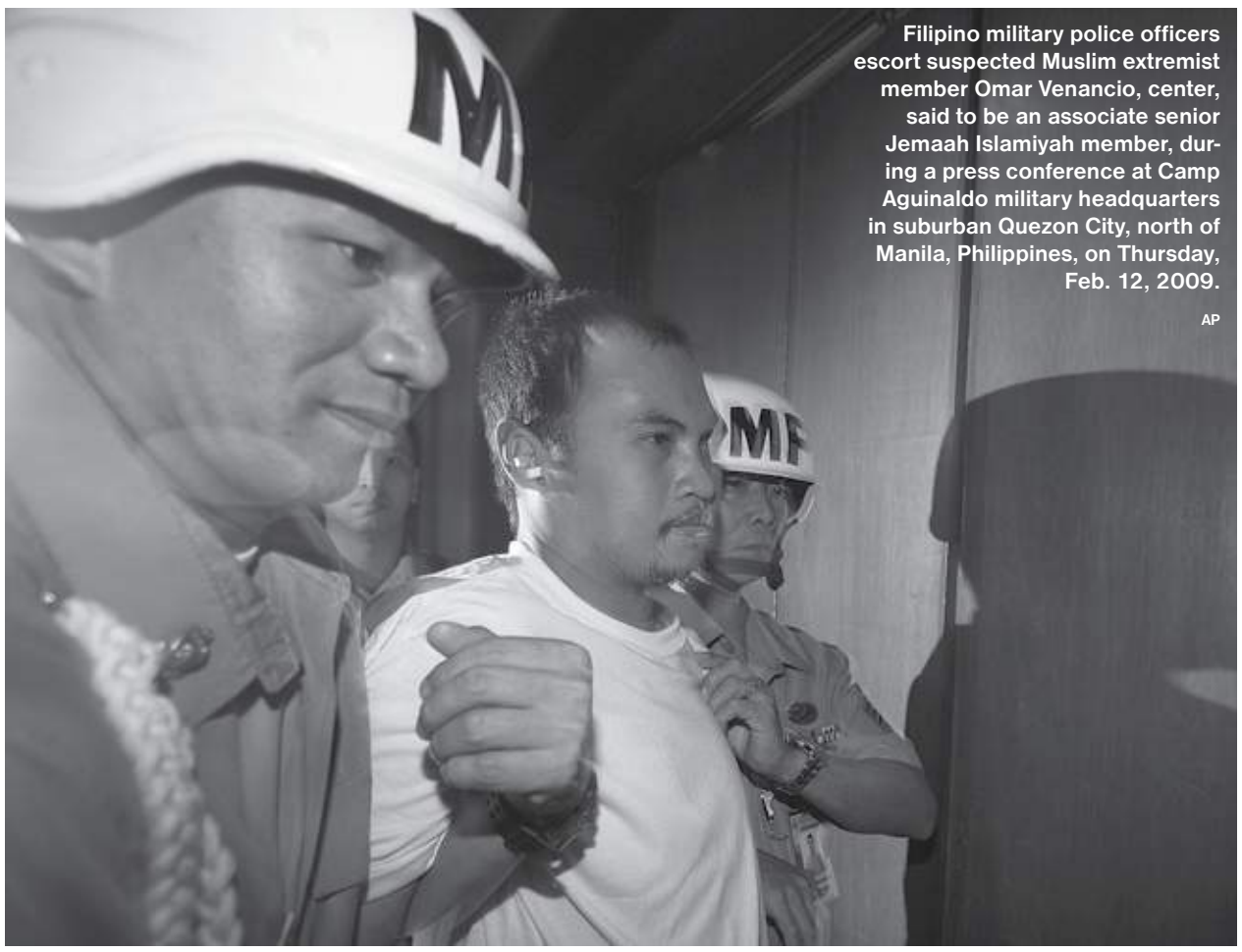
Philippine troops capture two militants who allegedly helped foreign terrorists

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Philippine officials say troops have captured two militants who allegedly helped top al-Qaida-linked terror suspects hide in the southern Philippines and carry out deadly bomb attacks.

Eduardo Ermita heads a government anti-terrorism agency. He says one of the men, Omar Venancio, allegedly helped a member of the Asian militant group Jemaah Islamiyah buy explosives intended for a suicide bombing at a Roman Catholic Cathedral in southern Davao city and other attacks in nearby beach resorts.

Ermita said Thursday the man was arrested with receipts for the explosives and described the plans during interrogation.

The other man, Mokasid Dilna, allegedly headed the Al-Khobar group, which is blamed for bombing passenger buses and businesses since 2007 after they rejected his extortion demands.



Filipino military police officers escort suspected Muslim extremist member Omar Venancio, center, said to be an associate senior Jemaah Islamiyah member, during a press conference at Camp Aguinaldo military headquarters in suburban Quezon City, north of Manila, Philippines, on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2009.

AP

Transfer of Marine convicted of rape to RP jail sought

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Leftist activists have protested outside the American Embassy in Manila to demand that a U.S. Marine convicted of rape be transferred immediately to a Philippine jail.

The Supreme Court on Wednesday ruled that Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith should be detained at a Philippine-run facility. He is being allowed to stay at the embassy pending negotiations on his transfer.

The rape case has stirred emotions in the former U.S. colony and has become a rallying point for activists demanding an end to U.S. military counterterrorism exercises.

As riot police watched, some two dozen activists from the women's group Gabriela picketed the embassy Thursday, carrying placards demanding Smith's transfer to a local jail.

Sri Lankan peace activist abducted in Philippines

By HRVOJE HRANJSKI
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — A Sri Lankan peace activist became the latest victim of a wave of kidnappings in the southern Philippines blamed on al-Qaida-linked militants, officials said Friday.

Omar Jalil, 36, from the nonpartisan group Nonviolent Peaceforce, which has been monitoring a decades-old Muslim separatist uprising in the Philippines, was taken by nine gunmen from his residence in coastal Lamitan town on Basilan island early Friday, said Basilan police chief Salik Macapantar.

The Filipino caretaker of the house managed to escape unharmed even as the gunmen opened fire, he said.

The caretaker was now guiding the navy and marines in combing the jungle hinterlands of Lamitan to try to locate the hostage, said the provincial vice governor, Al-Rasheed Sakalahul.

Suspected Abu Sayyaf militants, notorious for ransom kidnappings and terror attacks, are holding three teachers and a lending company employee on Basilan, and three Red Cross workers, including one Swiss and one Italian, on nearby Jolo island.

All were kidnapped this year, apparently as part of efforts by the Abu Sayyaf to raise badly needed funds after several of its leaders with connections to Middle Eastern financiers were killed in U.S.-backed offensives in recent years.

The Abu Sayyaf, which has more than 300 fighters, is on a U.S. blacklist of terrorist organizations because of links to al-Qaida and involvement in kidnappings, beheadings and bombings.

At least two militants holding the three Red Cross hostages were killed and nine marines wounded in a clash Monday when the captors attempted to break through a military cordon that has boxed them in, said Brig. Gen. Gaudencio Pangilinan. The hostages were believed to be unhurt, he said.

Officials have been hesitant to resort to a military rescue and have asked about 30 Abu Sayyaf gunmen to surrender their captives unconditionally. Speculation has mounted about a ransom demand ranging from $5 million to $10 million.

120 Marines deployed in Sulu, Basilan

By JULIE ALIPALA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The military will continue putting pressure on the Abu Sayyaf men holding three members of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as hostages.

Lt. Gen. Nelson Allaga, Western Mindanao Command chief, said that instead of withdrawing troops deployed near the Abu Sayyaf camp in the jungles of Indanan town as earlier demanded by the kidnappers, "we are going to maintain our pressure."

About 120 elite Marine forces from Palawan were deployed to Sulu and Basilan on Thursday.

"Tuluy-tuloy ang pressure (The pressure continues)," Allaga said, adding that he was confident that Swiss Andreas Notter, Italian engineer Eugenio Vagni and Filipino engineer Mary Jean Lacaba were safe because the kidnappers were using them as their leverage to stay alive.

Earlier, Philippine National Red Cross chair Sen. Richard Gordon appealed for less military pressure so that food and supply could be delivered to the captives.

Government troops and civilian volunteers have cordoned the area where the captives are believed to be kept.

"The decision will not come from us. Such appeal must be addressed to the Task Force ICRC headed by Governor [Abdusakur] Tan," Allaga said.

Allaga said a system had been devised to ensure that food and other basic needs would reach the concerned recipients. "Of course, the goods will pass through inspection. It's a resource control," he said.

Allaga said the kidnappers had been "abandoned by their own people."

"The local government and civilian volunteers are there supporting our troops because they are already tired of these bandits," he said.

An informant said the civilian volunteers were still in the area, "but their number has reduced and they do shifting assignments."

The source said Task Force ICRC had tapped civil society groups and people's organizations to negotiate for the release of the victims.

Allaga said the government forces were not only against the homegrown Abu Sayyaf bandits but they were "combined with Jemaah Islamiyah forces."

Armed Forces Chief of Staff General Alexander Yano earlier said that aside from the Abu Sayyaf group under Albader Parad and Umbra Jumdail, alias Doctor Abu, "we received reports there were JI elements involved."

Despite the kidnapping, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney said all US-funded projects, including the deployment of humanitarian workers in Sulu, would continue.

"Our workers are continuing with the work we do. We've got a lot of important projects and we are continuing them but careful of course, mindful of our security," Kenney told the Inquirer.

"We don't want to turn our backs on our friends [in Sulu], so we want to be there to continue our work on education, on developments," she said.

LAND REFORM PROTEST AP
Riot police officers try to arrest protesting farmers from the central Philippine provinces of Negros and Leyte at the foot of the bridge leading to the Presidential Palace in Manila, Philippines, Thursday, Feb. 12, 2009. The farmers demand the extension of the Land Reform Law as well as the redistribution of more than a hundred hectares of farmland allegedly owned by the family of Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's husband.

Boy carries bomb away from people

By EDWIN FERNANDEZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

COTABATO CITY—A boy unknowingly saved the lives of people and commuters when he carried away from them an improvised explosive device on a busy street here on Wednesday night.

Col. Domingo Gubway, chief of the military's Task Force Cotabato, said unidentified men on a motorcycle left a plastic bag containing a bomb fashioned from a 60-mm mortar with a mobile phone as a trigger mechanism.

The explosive was left at a waiting shed on Sinsuat and Gutierrez avenues at about 9 p.m.

Before responding policemen and Army bomb experts arrived, a boy, known in the area as one of the street children, carried the plastic bag and placed it somewhere, away from the people, witnesses said.

Experts led by Maj. Joel Aquino, later disposed of the explosive and brought it to Army headquarters.

Police believed the explosive could have been planted by local recruits of the Jemaah Islamiyah, a regional terror group.

Gubway said the explosive was similar to those planted by suspected rogue members of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in different parts of Central Mindanao.

$$$ PERSONAL FINANCE

Building your dream house

A checklist for first-time homebuyers

By Boyet Tejuco
MONEYSENSE

Editor's Note: This article is from MoneySense, the Philippines' first and only personal finance magazine. Visit www.moneysense.com.ph for more.

Imagine a happily married couple saving money during the next two years for their dream house. Both have satisfying jobs and earning above average salaries. They find a nice lot in a good neighborhood, accessible to work and major establishments. They find an architect through referrals. They hire a contractor to supervise the house construction. Everything seems to be in order. That is, until the lot's real owner knocks on their doorstep and charges them for illegal construction. It seems that the couple failed to double-check the lot based on the Transfer Certificate of Title (TCT).

The dream house becomes a nightmare. The story ends not entirely bad. The matter is settled outside the court with the real owner getting paid twice the value of the lot for damages.

Unbelievable? Things like this do happen but they can be avoided.

In building a home, certain issues have to be addressed. Below are some of the main considerations:

The lot

With urbanization, areas like Alabang, Muntinlupa, and Fairview, Quezon City that seemed far-flung years ago are now accessible. There are still a good number of vacant lots in Metro Manila but the lot prices vary based on their proximity to major centers and road networks.

Ideal travel time from home to work is an hour to an hour and a half. Prospective homeowners are searching as far as the outskirts of Metro Manila like Rizal, Bulacan, Cavite, and Laguna. Lots should be accessible to schools and hospitals, the market, and churches. Make sure basic utilities like electricity, water lines, telephone, cable, and Internet lines are accessible.

If you already have a lot, check and double-check your TCT. Make sure that the property has no pending cases to avoid future headaches. Hire the services of a surveyor to ensure that the boundaries given in your TCT are accurate and match the actual lot.

Before construction, the lot should also undergo soil testing to determine the kind of structure and number of storeys the lot can carry.

Time and money

In construction, these two factors are quite related. A bigger budget means continuous workflow and shorter construction period. In the process, you can save more.

How do you intend to finance the construction? Who among your family members can help shoulder the building expenses? How much is the annual household income? From the various housing loans available like PAG-IBIG and banks, find out which is the best for you.

Based on these, you can set a realistic budget and decide how much you're willing to spend for the house. Keep in mind that the cost of construction materials changes from time to time, so set aside allowances.

Manpower

The Philippines has a wealth of manpower from architects to contractors and laborers, many of whom are going to Middle East countries. Owners should first get the services of a licensed architect. Ask friends and relatives for referrals. Inside subdivisions, you may opt to look for your candidate based on their existing works.

Architects are licensed professionals under the Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC), making them the best and only choice in the field of design. Currently, there have been cases filed against non-architects who have misrepresented themselves. When in doubt about an architect or contractor, you can inquire from the PRC or the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The law requires the representation of architects in almost all forms of transactions from the application of building permits to construction to completion. A contractor is similar to a wedding planner, acting as construction supervisor on the owner's behalf. Although not everybody can afford a contractor, it is advisable to have one.

Make sure you have a contract for every transaction which describes in detail the architect or the contractor's scope of work and responsibilities, mode of payment, and other pertinent information. The Constitution protects clients from possible abuses by contractors and vice versa.

Architect Jenner P. Macaballug, managing principal of J.P. Macaballug Architectural Services advises, "Hire a 3D renderer or walk-through artist for added visuals to ease decision-making for owners. Few owners can understand the concepts of plans so walk-throughs allow them to see and feel the space."

Space requirements and output

Filipinos are generally creative and receptive to new ideas. We adapt new ideas and "Filipinize" them. But during conceptualization, we sometimes lose sight of what we really need.

Architects should enlighten you regarding practical design and address the requirements of the users at the same time. Your inputs are highly invaluable during the design development phase because spaces should be set according to your lifestyle and norms. Effective and sound design should work for the people who will live in the house instead of forcing you to adjust to the design.

Will you be bringing in new furnishings or reuse your old stuff? Make a list of things you still intend to use. Consider the layout of your spaces based on the furnishings you intend to bring with you and buy.

Consider spaces, doors and windows. In some cases, you are forced to make last minute adjustments because some of your previous belongings cannot fit in the new house, like perhaps the bed that cannot fit inside the main entry. Worse, you may be forced to dispose of these items, resulting to additional costs.

Feel free to consult a feng shui expert but incorporate the recommendations with the design before actual construction.

Building materials and technology

With continuous innovations in building technology, there is a wealth of building materials now available from door and window openings to ceilings and roofing materials. Take advantage of the opportunity to know the latest in building technology.

These include environment-friendly termite killers, solar-powered water heaters, and non-toxic paints. There are even pre-fabricated houses available in the market, prices of which are below half a million. In some cases, these materials are not only economical but also earth-friendly.

Numerous establishments like MC Home Depot house a number of building suppliers under one roof, making purchasing for building materials easier. Specialty shops and suppliers can be sourced out via Internet, phone directories, and media advertisements.

In the Philippines, there are two major events that showcase the latest and best in building technology: the Philippine World Building and Construction Exposition (WorldBex) and Philippine Construction Exposition (Philconstruct), held in the first and last quarter of the year, respectively. So visit those expos to get a better idea of what materials and technologies are available in the market.

Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Eternal flame

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Movie queen Gloria Romero was the first to take note of her circumstantial bond with fellow actresses Boots Anson-Roa and Lorna Tolentino.

"We're all widows," Gloria said, laughing gently. Or as Boots put it: "KKB, Kabarangay Kong Biyuda."

"We learn from each other," added Lorna, whom Boots gifted with a set of the book series "A Time to Grieve," by Kenneth C. Haugk.

At certain points in their professional lives, they shared the big and small screens. Who could have known that they would play the same challenging role off-screen—that of caregiver to their respective husbands?

Gloria has spent four Valentines without Juancho Gutierrez; and Boots, two without Pete Roa. This is Lorna's first without Rudy Fernandez.

Life will never be the same, they agreed, but they are all finding ways to celebrate love after loss.

No hysterics

The way Gloria Romero recalled that turning point in her life, it wasn't as melodramatic as depicted in the movies.

Nine years ago, when she decided to take in the ailing Juancho after decades of separation, Gloria said there was "no drama, no hysterics." She just "accepted it, without reservation."

She was on the set of the TV series "Labs Ko si Babe" in Laguna, when she got a call from daughter Maritess. "She said her dad had suffered a stroke. He was in the ICU (Intensive Care Unit), the left side of his body was paralyzed and there was no one to take care of him."

Immediately, she decided it was God's will that she and Maritess should help Juancho in his hour of need. "He never remarried. I didn't do it for the publicity. It was just the right thing to do."

After a while, to her surprise, she realized that while they were helping Juancho, he was enriching their lives in many ways. "Maritess became closer to her dad. She often took him out with her son Christopher," Gloria said.

The boy was 8 at the time. Gloria recalled: "Every morning before school and every night before bed, he would drop by his lolo's room and ask, 'How are you, Lolo?' I would always catch Juancho teary-eyed after our apo's visit."

Her own relationship with Juancho blossomed. "Once, I checked on him, after arriving from work late at night. He told me, 'Kawawa ka naman, pagod na pagod ka na sa kakatrabaho.' I told him, 'It's okay, just get well soon.'"

She made sure Juancho got the best care possible. "He was in and out of the hospital. He was bed-ridden and often had seizures. But I made sure his therapy sessions continued."

Her faith sustained her. "It wasn't easy," she admitted. It was a drain on the family's resources, too. "In all humility, I prayed only that God would give me the means to [continue taking] care of him. And He did. He sent more jobs than I could handle."

Bliss, blisters

Pete Roa once joked that married life with Boots Anson-Roa was bliss for her and blisters for him.

Boots said his humor is what she misses most about her husband, who succumbed to cancer in 2007 after 10 years as a stroke survivor. "His unexpected, hilarious one-liners and punch lines never failed to throw us off."

Turning reflective, Boots added that she also misses Pete's "quiet, yet abiding presence..." his "gentle yet formidable strength."

"Sickness and pain ... breaks not only the body, but also the spirit," she explained. "Spouses who are also caregivers are doubly challenged. They may feel that they can't fully empathize with their partner's suffering. I advise patience, compassion and constant prayer. God makes a most faithful partner amid trials."

Philippine movie queen Gloria Romero.

Yet even now, she said, she sometimes wakes up in tears. "He remains in my heart," Boots said.

She immerses herself in work as head of Mowelfund, teacher in UP and Ateneo and radio anchor (dzMM) and thankfully, for the most part, it works.

That toughest part of the healing process is "shaking off the feeling of loss," Boots said. "Those lightning moments, even amid a flurry of activities, those paralyzing moments when it hits me yet again—Pete is actually gone."

She has decided that her road to healing shouldn't be traveled alone. She seeks counsel and comfort from books and conversations with priests, nuns, and her children.

"Meditation and prayer are my strongest allies. Daily Mass helps. Lighting candles at Pete's little altar in my room alleviates sorrow."

One thing more: "The best way to heal is to help others heal, too. Get out of your shell, reach out and save others from grief. Only then can you save yourself."

And should a second shot at happiness present itself? "Loving again? We don't plan that," said Boots. "Maybe as long as it's not on the rebound, or just to fill the void. And it should be guilt-free."

Surprises big and small

Lorna Tolentino recently received an unmarked package via Fedex. It was a book, Don Piper's "90 Minutes in Heaven."

Nine months after the passing of husband Rudy Fernandez, Lorna continues to receive surprises, big and small, from friends and strangers.

She also continues to stumble upon "little notes" left by Rudy in their conjugal home. "One letter was about a joke we once shared. I never thought he would remember it, but he took the time to write it down. He has left lots of reminders around the house."

She misses Rudy's laughter most of all, she said. "The best in the world—playful, infectious."

Still, it's a daily struggle with loneliness. "I miss him every day. Once, I found myself in his closet, crying while fixing his clothes, asking repeatedly, 'Why did you leave me?' When I fill up forms, I forget to indicate that Rudy is deceased."

It's been particularly difficult, she said, because "it was my first birthday (Dec. 23), first Christmas, first New Year, first Valentine, my first everything without him."

This year, she will spend Love Day with sons Ralph and Renz at Rudy's grave site in Heritage Park. She's often there nowadays, anyway, supervising the building of a mausoleum.

"I'm very hands-on," she said, "personally picking the fixtures." Plus, keeping herself busy distracts her, she admitted.

"When Rudy was alive, he kept reminding me to stay positive. Though he was sick, he never allowed himself to feel defeated," LT recalled. "He looked at the bright side of everything. I learned that from him. When I feel sad, I tell myself that he's in a better place."

Her advice to other widows? To read books like "Journeying Through Grief," "90 Minutes in Heaven" and "The Art of Worldly Wisdom."

"Tita Boots and Sharon [Cuneta] sent me the first two books. My sons recommended 'The Art of Worldly Wisdom."

Like Boots, LT has found the benefit of opening one's heart to others: "Accept help, and help others at the same time."

Torn between Chard, Piolo

MANILA, Philippines—KC Concepcion didn't want to talk about Piolo Pascual at first, "out of respect" for current leading man Richard Gutierrez.

In an exclusive interview with Inquirer recently, she explained that her top priority was her movie with Chard, "When I Met U" and that she was pushing "Lovers in Paris," her forthcoming soap opera with Piolo, to the back burner.

She refrained from watching DVDs of "Lovers in Paris" provided by home network ABS-CBN. "I don't want to mix up Vivian, my character in 'Lovers' with Jenny, my role in 'When I Met U.'"

But how does it feel to be torn between two of the country's hottest hunks, Piolo and Chard?

"Chard will always be special to me," KC explained. "All my major firsts in show biz were with him."

She continued: "Piolo is more mature and a bit more experienced than Chard, [so] Piolo is someone I can learn from, emotionally. He's very generous in sharing his insights." ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

KC Concepcion

'Kapuso' stars undergo drug test

By Abigail Kwok
INQUIRER.NET

MANILA, Philippines—Eleven "Kapuso" stars voluntarily underwent drug testing at Camp Crame Thursday in a bid to set a "good example for the youth."

The GMA broadcast network stars, led by past Starstruck members Mark Herras, Iwa Moto, and Ryza Cenon, went to the Philippine National Police headquarters to submit to drug testing.

"We're here because we want to show to all that we support government's drug test program," said Herras, 22.

"We also would like to set a good example for the youth who have gone astray, at the same time to our fellow actors," he said.

The government intensifies its campaign to curb illegal drugs use as Congress probes allegations that state prosecutors were offered bribes in exchange for the release of drug suspects arrested last year in sting operations around Metro Manila.

The GMA Artist Center said it regulates and monitors all its talents against illegal drug use and other vices.

"On our end at GMA, our artists, we regulate a lot of things especially with their lifestyle. It is stated in their management contracts that they are not to get into anything like this [drugs]. And we've checked on them, we're always with them," said RC Baltazar of the artist center.

He said GMA artists also undergo annual physical tests to make sure they are healthy.

"We take care of our artists very well and it is part of our service to them as network stars to get them health checks and we guard them very well because their jobs are actually health risks," Baltazar said.

Interior and Local Government secretary Ronaldo Puno welcomed the television celebrities, saying the move was meant to show that keeping away from drugs "would be a policy for all."

Other "Kapuso" stars who submitted themselves to drug tests are Rainier Castillo, Mike Tan, Kevin Santos, Gino dela Pena, Victor Aliwalas, Paulo Avelino, Prince Stefan and Kaye Alipio.

Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Time to talk

The question of impunity now lies at the doorstep of Kristie Kenney as she winds down her stint as US ambassador to the Philippines. On one hand, having upheld the validity of the Visiting Forces Agreement, the Supreme Court has rendered a judgment favorable to the Philippine and American governments. On the other hand, having decided as well that there are no ifs, ands or buts about the kind of custody—Philippine and no other—in which American servicemen convicted of crimes in the Philippines ought to be kept, the United States, in particular the new administration of President Barack Obama, now risks having its bluff being called.

America is being called upon to prove that its commitment to a new kind relationship with both friends and foes is a substantive and not merely a rhetorical departure from the Bush years. Kenny, as a career diplomat, hewed closely to Washington's supremacist attitudes, but at the end of her tour of duty in Manila, she is now the human face of a new political dispensation.

In its decision, penned by Justice Adolfo Azcuna, the Supreme Court concluded that the Visiting Forces Agreement is an agreement that falls under the ambit of the Philippine-US Mutual Defense Treaty, ratified by the senates of both countries, establishing a policy, that is, an alliance, between the two nations. The VFA, the Court said, removed one irritant dating back to the colonial period: the legal impunity enjoyed by American troops. It also noted that in general, the United States has complied faithfully with its obligations under the VFA.

But after the conviction of Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, a new irritant arose over the question of custody which an agreement signed by Kenny and Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo granted to the US Embassy.

Azcuna boiled down the issue of custody as follows: "It is clear that the parties to the VFA recognized the difference between custody during the trial and detention after conviction, because they provided for a specific arrangement to cover detention. And this specific arrangement clearly states not only that the detention shall be carried out in facilities agreed on by authorities of both parties, but also that the detention shall be 'by Philippine authorities.' Therefore, the Romulo-Kenney Agreements of Dec. 19 and 22, 2006, which are agreements on the detention of the accused in the United States Embassy, are not in accord with the VFA itself because such detention is not 'by Philippine authorities'."

The Court has directed the secretary of foreign affairs "to forthwith negotiate with the United States representatives for the appropriate agreement on detention facilities under Philippine authorities as provided in Art. V, Sec. 10 of the VFA, pending which the status quo shall be maintained until further orders by this Court." This means Smith remains in US custody and will remain so, until the secretary of foreign affairs negotiates with the US government for a custody mechanism that first of all, places Smith firmly under the custody of Filipino authorities, while recognizing the rights of American authorities to have access to him.

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What are they talking about?

There's The Rub
By CONRADO DE QUIROS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Joker Arroyo says that the World Bank being the accuser, it should send its officials to the Senate hearing to present its case against Mike Arroyo.

"No appearance [by the World Bank], no case," he said on radio. The World Bank's invocation of immunity from participating in the Senate inquiry, he said, was like the executive privilege cited by the President's Cabinet during congressional inquiries. "In both cases, they don't want to testify. Both are condemnable. The Senate was irritated by the claim of executive privilege and yet condones the claim of immunity. Why the double standard?"

Miriam Defensor-Santiago says she is inclined to excuse the First Gentleman from appearing in her committee's investigation of the rigging of World Bank projects on grounds of health. However, she is also inclined to persuade him to submit a deposition to the same committee to clear his name of any wrongdoing.

Juan Ponce Enrile cites health reasons, too, for not wanting to summon the First Gentleman to the Senate. We all know he had a delicate operation a couple of years ago. His health remains fragile. He, Enrile, will not be responsible for something untoward happening to him. What if he doubled up and collapsed on the Senate floor under grilling?

First, Joker Arroyo's argument: If executive privilege is so condemnable, why didn't he emit a squeak when Romulo Neri was citing that condemnable excuse to not reveal whether or not his boss, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ordered, abetted, and rammed through the national broadband network project? Why didn't he rant and rave majestically at the thought of crooks getting away as he did at the impeachment trial when most of the supremely condemnable justices (what monumental Newspeak, "justices") ruled to uphold that same condemnable excuse?

In fact, where is the double standard? Did Joker say he was a lawyer? Why on earth should the laws that apply to Filipino officials apply to foreign banking officials as well? Neri is a Filipino public official, Ms Arroyo is a Filipino public official—at least to use the word "Filipino" loosely. They are compelled by their citizenship and their high office to answer to the people. Refusing to tell whether or not Ms Arroyo ordered, abetted and rammed through the NBN scam is not answering to the people. It is screwing the people. And it is screwing the law. At least the one written in the hearts and minds of the people and not the one the Supreme Courtesans choose to manufacture for every occasion, or malfeasance.

The World Bank officials are not Filipino citizens. They are citizens of the world, largely of America, to whom Filipino officials troop to, hat in one hand and begging bowl in the other, to inveigle money from, and as this case shows, to purloin it afterward. The World Bank is not accusing anybody, it is refusing to give more money to Filipinos it deems to be crooks. It is Filipino oppositionists who, using the World Bank report that says Mike Arroyo is party to the crookedness, are accusing him. Why should the World Bank appear in the Senate? Why should it care whether or not Filipinos want to screw each other? All it cares about, and should, is that it isn't screwed by anyone, Filipino or non-Filipino, man or woman, first or last gentleman.

While at this, why should any World Bank official want to appear before Miriam's committee? He, or she, won't be able to understand Miriam's English anyway, not to speak of her principles. Everything will be lost in translation.

Which brings me to Miriam's position: Joker did mention the concept of double standard. It is a testament to his current powers of discernment that he can espy double standards in the fuzzy horizon and not one right under his nose. Can there be any more breathtaking case of double standard than Miriam demanding at the top of her voice, which is not a pleasant thing to hear, that Eliseo de la Paz be arrested for being a no-show at her hearing and now groveling before Mike Arroyo?

De la Paz, of course, is the former comptroller of the Philippine National Police who had 120,00 euros confiscated from him by Russian immigration officials. Clearly, Miriam's inclinations, like her moods, differ from person to person, changing suddenly from overbearing when looking down on presumed inferiors to obsequious when looking up at acknowledged superiors, or sources of benefaction. Why didn't she say to De la Paz that she was inclined to excuse him from appearing in her committee for reasons of health, specifically for brooding over the loss of a huge amount of money throughout his flight home, thereby suffering from more than the usual dose of jet lag? Why didn't he say to De la Paz that he would be well-advised to clear his name but that a deposition should be enough?

Enrile's solicitousness for the First Gentleman's health is also awe-inspiring but completely mystifying. Surely it is far more stressful to be flying abroad so many times a year and being prey to temptations one may no longer yield to, thus making one exclaim not "A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's heaven for?" but "What is within grasp should not exceed a man's reach, or what's heaven for?" Surely it is far more stressful to play golf with the Chinese, even if one speaks the same language as many of its officials and heads of companies, and furiously driving deals that are holes-in-one for oneself but are holes-in-the-head for Juan de la Cruz? Surely it is far more stressful living with his wife?

Obviously Enrile has lost a great deal of his bravado or capacity to take risks from his coup-plotting days. He hasn't stopped to think that if the First Gentleman were stressed and distressed, vexed and hexed, at the floor of the Senate, he might be hailed a hero.

Story of his life: Too late the hero.

Breaking up with Rizal

Looking Back
By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

I'm often asked about Jose Rizal's loves because other heroes did not have as many lovers. Unlike Rizal, other heroes left little or no documentation on this aspect of their lives that should remain private. What does love have to do with the emergence of the nation? Constipated academics say there is none, being partial to grand narratives where love has no place, not even in the footnotes.

But what would history be like if Antony did not have Cleopatra? What is Hitler without Eva Braun, Napoleon without Josephine, Ferdinand Marcos without Imelda? Are these relations trivial? Now that we have histories of salt, sugar, the potato or the pencil, if historians conjure histories of the penis and menstrual cycles, why should personal lives of great men and women be seen as trivial gossip?

Rizal left us with a correspondence of 954 letters in four groupings: letters to and from his family, to members of the Propaganda Movement, to Ferdinand Blumentritt, and a volume deemed "miscellaneous" to cover people who defied classification. Rizal's women are all lumped under "Miscellaneous Correspondence." Here we find: two letters from Leonor Rivera, two letters from "Petite Suzanne," four letters from Nellie Boustead, and two from Josephine Bracken. We only have the letters from the women, none from Rizal. This is significant. Did Rizal destroy his own letters or did family or compilers of his papers edit them out? We will never know and I hope these will surface in my lifetime.

Re-reading these letters led me to two break-up letters that are worth pondering on Valentine's Day. The first, from Nellie Boustead, was written from Biarritz in France and dated May 11, 1891. Her mother doesn't approve of Rizal:

"I have to give you an advice that I believe will be well for you to follow at least for the moment.

"It would have been preferable now that you have written my parents in your second to the last letter, to stop asking for my hand for the time being, if you had not talked to them in the last one, for although my father understands what it is, my mother, if she understands it, the least—does not like to understand it anymore.

"She exposed to me the difficulties that might present themselves: that you are not so settled as to permit yourself to maintain a family etc. etc. I answered her, 'Rizal can do what he desires; he has told me that his intention is never to marry me before he has what he lacks in order to maintain a home; and on the other hand I have shown him that I could not give him a categorical answer before he will have accepted the condition that I have asked of him. Jose is free to do it or not to do it, and consequently I for my part am free to give or not to give any categorical answer to his sentiments towards me, which I like to believe should be sincere.'

"Lastly, as it is too long to relate to you what I said: but one of the things that she said to me, 'that I should not fall into the illusion of believing myself much beloved, as she does not doubt that I do not possess anything attractive.' I said I hardly look at myself, but as to falling into illusions I think it unlikely, because I have never [part missing or illegible] that I possessed nothing extraordinary and if I am beloved by someone, it is he that is responsible for his madness.

"I should like to beg you not to write me anymore and I [?]to renew it to you even thus if you write to Miss Johnson do not talk of me anymore because I see that she is not better than other persons, and that she, like others, would like nothing more than her own interest. She may yet compromise me!

"What I can say is that it is difficult to watch over a house in which many women like to wag their tongues and to usurp the place of the one who should be, next to the owner of the house, the only person that gives orders; in this there is no way of being in the confidence of others."

The letter is incomplete and cryptic. It ends with references to wagging tongues and attacks on Rizal. None of it makes sense because we don't have Rizal's letters.

Josephine Bracken, writing to Rizal from Manila on Aug. 13, 1896, was more direct. She began with mangoes, cheese, lanzones and clothes Rizal wants sent to his prison ship on Manila Bay, and then she broke down:

"Ah my dear I am suffering a great deal with them in Trozo, it is quite true they ought to be ashamed of me as they say in my face & in Presenance of Sra Narcisa & their children because I am not married to you. So if you heare that I don't go to Trozo any more, don't be surprised, if you like me to send all your things on board the man of war I can do so. If you go to Spain you see any one of your fancy you better marry her, but dear heare me: better to marry than to live like who [how] we have been doing. I am not ashamed to let people know my life with you, but as your dear Sisters are ashamed I think you had better get married to some one else. Your Sister Narcisa and your father they are very good and kind to me."

The Rizal family led by Teodora Alonso did not approve of Josephine and their live-in relationship and Rizal must have been in quite a spot having to choose between his mother and his partner. This may be trivial to some historians but it makes engaging reading for Valentine's Day.

Maharlika–Samu't Sari

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

VALENTINE ROSES

The female staff and personnel of Century Insurance Corp., Century Travel, and Century Finance have their picture taken with CIC vice president Andy Del Mundo. This is how Del Mundo celebrates Valentine's Day every year with the ladies at Century Group, with the gift of a red rose for each one.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BELATED HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Belated birthday greetings go out to Ashley Monique Baza Bornilla who turned 17 years old on Feb. 12. Greetings come out from your favorite cousin Lesley, who said "Love you and many more birthdays to come!"

VALENTINE GREETINGS

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"The best portion of a good man's life, his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love." Happy Valentines Day, loves! From Mel & Jo.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Northern Marianas Badminton Federation organized a farewell party for Juliet Ramos, sitting right, last Jan. 31 at LabTech owner's Elma Labuson's house in As Matuis.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Juliet Ramos, third from left, and her daughter Debbie, seventh from left, pose with friends prior to boarding their plane bound for Manila, Philippines. The mother and daughter will eventually join Ramos' husband, Ed, and youngest daughter, Danielle, in Guam.

JAYVEE VALLEJERA

JP WALK

Participants in last Saturday's "A Walk to Remember" to commemorate the first death anniversary of Saipan Tribune publisher JP Pangelinan have their picture taken while resting at the Susupe Beach Park.

JAYVEE VALLEJERA

Jay of Shirley's Restaurant and his family have their picture taken after Saturday's "A Walk to Remember" at the Susupe Beach Park.

JAYVEE VALLEJERA

Staff of Shirley's Restaurant after Saturday's "A Walk to Remember" at the Susupe Beach Park.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIRTHDAY BOY

Happy, happy 7th birthday to our favorite boy Kirro, left, who is shown in this picture with his older sister Abby Kaye and younger brother Kier. Wishing you all the best. Hope you grow more in love and peace and good health. Always be a good boy. We love you always. Love: Papa, Mama, Ate Abby, Kier, Kevin, Tita Cindy, Tito Glenn, and Christian.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy Birthday Kirro, we love you. Ate Abby is always here to help you. I love you. Stay sweet!

Youngstyle

Who is older, Darwin or Lincoln? (Hint: It's a Trick Question)

By VALERIE STRAUSS
(c) 2009, The Washington Post

How weird is it that the two men who may be the most influential people to live and die in the 19th century were born on the very same day?

Abraham Lincoln and Charles Darwin came into the world on Feb. 12, 1809.

One was born in a log cabin in Kentucky to poor parents, the other in a country estate to a wealthy British family.

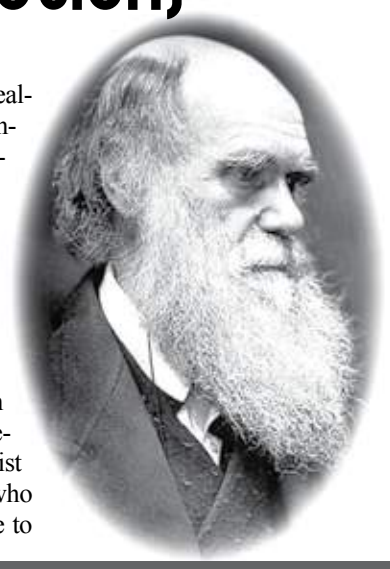
The two never met. But they both changed the most basic ways that people viewed human existence and helped bring about a new era in the history of human thought.

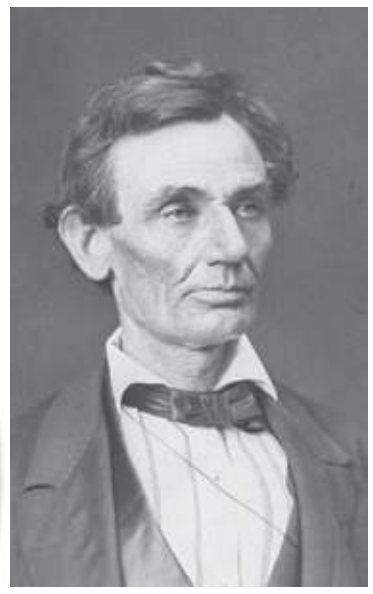
"If slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong."

Lincoln said that and declared freedom for the South's slaves in the early 1860s, an act for which he is beloved today. But in his own time Lincoln was highly controversial, as was the emancipation of slaves. It may also surprise you that Lincoln's great life was filled with heartbreak and disappointment.

"It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change."

That was what Darwin realized after a long trip that included a stop in the Galapagos Islands, 600 miles west of South America. His theory that populations of living things evolve over generations through a process called natural selection was published in a famous 1859 book called "On the Origin of Species." Darwin had become popular as a naturalist but was attacked by those who saw evolution as a challenge to the creation story in the Bible.





THE WASHINGTON POST
Abraham Lincoln (right) and Charles Darwin, two men who may be the most influential people in the 19th century, were born on the same day: Feb. 12, 1809. One was born in a log cabin in Kentucky to poor parents, the other in a country estate to a wealthy British family.

The revolutions in thought that these men set off—emancipation and evolution—have strong links to life today. The election of Barack Obama as the first black U.S. president completed a circle that started with Lincoln's decision to free the slaves. Today most scientists agree that evolution explains human existence and life's biological complexities. But for some, evolution is still very controversial.

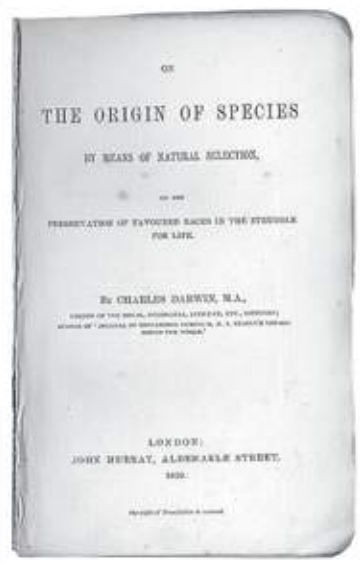
Lincoln and Darwin share similarities beyond their birthday. Both lost their mothers at a young age: Darwin at 8 and Lincoln at 9. As adults, both watched children of their own die—and suffered terribly over the losses. And both took a long time developing their now famous ideas that changed the world.

A Bicentennial Birthday

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

The 200th anniversary of something is called a "bicentennial": "bi" meaning two and "centennial" meaning hundred. So Thursday marks the bicentennial of the births of Abraham Lincoln and Charles Darwin.

A Proclamation.


ON THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES
BY MEANS OF NATURAL SELECTION,
LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

THE WASHINGTON POST
Abraham Lincoln and Charles Darwin never met. But they both changed the most basic ways that people viewed human existence and helped bring about a new era in the history of human thought. From left, Lincoln's "Emancipation Proclamation" and Darwin's "On the Origin of Species."

Timelines for Lincoln and Darwin

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

Here's a look at the lives of these great thinkers and doers:

LINCOLN

1818: Lincoln's mother dies. He gets a few months of formal schooling, but he taught himself to read—and later even taught himself to become a lawyer.

1834: Is elected to the Illinois legislature.

1842: Marries Mary Todd, who came from a wealthy family. They had four children, one who died as an infant and another at age 12.

1843: Loses his first election for Congress at age 34. Was elected in 1846 and served one term.

1858: Runs for Stephen Douglas' seat in the U.S. Senate and takes part in now-famous debates with him. Says the United States could not survive as a country that allowed slavery to be legal in the South. He loses the election.

1860: Is elected the 16th president. Grows a beard, perhaps after receiving a letter from a 12-year-old girl who said he would look much better with one.

1861: Sends the Union Army into battle to stop the South from seceding from (leaving) the Union. The Civil War begins.

1862-63: Abolishes slavery in Washington and issues the Emancipation Proclamation, banning slavery in the South.

1864: Wins re-election.

1865: The Civil War ends with the Confederate army surrender on April 9. Days later, Lincoln is assassinated at age 56 while attending a play at Ford's Theatre in Washington.

DARWIN

1818: Goes to boarding school at age 9. He dislikes classes but loves observing animals and collecting beetles.

1827: Studies medicine but quits to study religion. His father wanted him to be a minister.

1831: Sets sail on the *Beagle*, a 90-by-24-foot boat on which he served as a naturalist. He gets seasick right after the boat leaves.

1835: The *Beagle* arrives in the Galapagos, where Darwin saw changes in animals that later helped him realize that living things change over time to fit into their environment.

1836: The *Beagle* arrives home after a trip that took 4 years, 9 months and 5 days.

1839: Marries Emma Wedgwood. The Wedgwood family is famous for making china. They had 10 children; three of them died before the age of 11.

1859: Publishes his famous book. The sixth edition, in 1872, changed the title to "The Origin of Species."

1866: At age 57, grows a beard for the first time.

1871: Publishes "The Descent of Man," about human evolution.

1882: Dies at age 73.

Many ways to mark Abe's 200th birthday

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

New Lincoln stamps. An exhibit that includes the Lincoln Bible that Barack Obama used to take the presidential oath last month. An online teach-in with Lincoln experts.

Those are all special events taking place to honor Abraham Lincoln on his 200th birthday, which is Thursday. Here are details:

■ The U.S. Postal Service on Monday began selling four new stamps depicting stages of Lincoln's life.

They show him splitting rails when he was young, and working as a lawyer, as a politician and as president.

■ On Thursday, a 45-minute live, online teach-in will take place at the National Archives. The event is aimed at middle and high school students—and already 4,000 schools nationwide are participating. It is available to everyone, too, online at www.history.com/lincoln.

Three Lincoln experts, including author Doris Kearns Goodwin, will discuss Lincoln and take questions from the audience.

■ Also on Thursday, the Library of Congress in Washington opens an exhibit called "With Malice Toward None" that will trace Lincoln's life and display rarely seen treasures.

It will also include letters, photographs and political cartoons, as well as Lincoln's grammar book, his family Bible and originals of both of his presidential inaugural addresses.

■ The Newseum in Washington is opening an exhibit on Saturday called "Manhunt: Chasing Lincoln's Killer."

It reveals how Lincoln's death and the hunt for his killer changed the way news was reported. This holiday weekend, up to three kids can get free admission to the Newseum with one adult ticket. Information: www.newseum.org.

Even the biggest sports heroes aren't perfect

By FRED BOWEN
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

USA Swimming has suspended Olympic superstar Michael Phelps from competition for three months. The national body took that action after a British newspaper published a photograph that seemed to show the 14-time gold medal winner using marijuana, an illegal drug, at a college party last fall.

Phelps admitted that his behavior was "regrettable" and that he had used "bad judgment."

USA Swimming said it was punishing Phelps because it wanted to "send a message to Michael" and especially because he is "a role model and hero to hundreds of thousands of kids."

So should all the kids who look up to Phelps and were so excited when he won a record eight gold medals in the 2008 Summer Olympics take down posters of him from their bedroom walls?

I'm not so sure they should.

Let's be clear. I think using illegal drugs is wrong. It's wrong for adults, for kids and for Olympic champions. And I agree that Phelps should be punished for his actions.

But I also think it is good for kids and their parents to remember that just because someone is good at a sport does not automatically mean that he is a good person or good at something else. Being a hero in a game or a match or in the Olympics does not make you a hero in every part of your life.

For example, a few days ago, Tiger Woods' wife gave birth to their second child. Woods has won 65 PGA golf tournaments, including 14 majors. He may be the greatest golfer who has ever lived. But all of his skill as a golfer won't help him be a good dad. Being a good dad is very different from being a good golfer.

Think of your own school. Is the kid who is the best athlete in your grade always the best student? Or the best friend? Or the nicest kid?

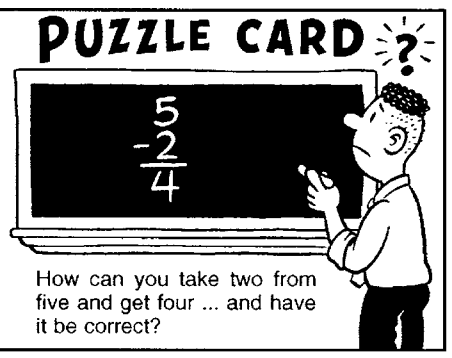
Phelps is a dedicated, hardworking swimmer. Reports indicate that he is back in the pool training hard, despite the suspension. Just because Phelps can swim faster than anyone in the world does not mean he doesn't make mistakes.

Kids can still admire Phelps for his swimming skill and for the effort he showed in becoming an Olympic champion. And kids can use him as a good example of how they can become better at their favorite sport if they work hard.

But that doesn't mean that kids should always try in every way to be like Mike.

Fred Bowen is an author of sports novels for kids.

PUZZLE CARD



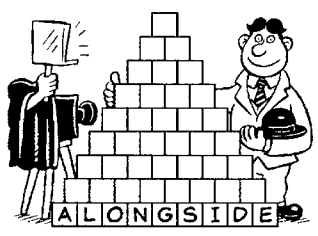
How can you take two from five and get four ... and have it be correct?

Answer: Take the word "FIVE" and remove "2" of the letters, "F" and "E." You now have "IV," which, in Roman numerals, equals "4." You see, five minus two does equal four. Any questions?

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

THE PYRAMID OF WORD POWER!



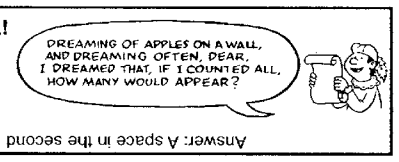
Starting with the given word ALONGSIDE at the bottom of our word pyramid, try dropping one letter at a time as you work your way up, so that the remaining letters at each level spell out a new word. The following helpful hints are in ascending order.

1. Next to (given).
2. A type of glance.
3. Roman army units.
4. A part of a shoe.
5. Loud, unpleasant sound.
6. Front of an aircraft.
7. A single unit.
8. Position indicator.
9. Element symbol.

Answers: (from the bottom up): Alongside, sidelong, legions, insole, noise, nose, one, on, O (oxygen).

A "RIDDLE" BY LEWIS CARROLL!

To know the answer, find the one "character" that is missing from the poem.



Answer: A space in the second line: "And dreaming of ten, dear." Ten apples.

DON'T GO "BALD" TRYING TO SOLVE THIS ONE! At right is a word square. Can you find the four five-letter words that match the definitions below? All words used must read the same both across and down.

1. Found on U.S. coins (given). 2. Sections set apart.
3. Wheels with teeth. 4. Wormlike form of insects.
5. Short, literary composition.

1 E	2 A	3 G	4 L	5 E
2 A				
3 G				
4 L				
5 E				

Answers: 1. Eagle. 2. Areas. Gears. 4. Larva. 5. Essay.

Illustrated by David Coulson

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New dog isn't like old one

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: Our beloved mutt "Pistol" was put to sleep a year ago after battling cancer. Two months ago, my son and I adopted a new dog, "Skyler," who is mostly Swiss mountain dog and we're not sure what else. Skyler is about 3 years old, and I'm not sure if he's adapting well to his new home, He barks furiously at the slightest noise and barks constantly at any visitors. Pistol was never like this, and he also was an adult adoption. How can we get Skyler to settle down?—Janet in Kansas City, Mo.

DEAR JANET: Well, first, remind yourself that Skyler and Pistol are two different dogs, and that—as adult adoptees—you don't know what either of their upbringings were like. As a different dog, Skyler will have a different personality as well, and that also determines how he reacts to new noises and people.

It's important not to compare your new dog to the old dog. But we often do that with pets—it's part of the grieving process when we lose a beloved companion.

So, be patient with Skyler. He needs time to become accustomed to his new environment, and he needs to be slowly socialized rather than introduced to all your friends at once, which can be quite overwhelming for a pet. He needs regular obedience training and steady, predictable interaction with the household so he will become comfortable with the rhythms and rules of his new life.

And, be patient with yourself. Pistol will always be a part of your life, and you will miss him. Skyler isn't a replacement for Pistol; he's a new addition. Give yourself time to get past Pistol's loss and to accept Skyler for the dog that he is.

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was noted American journalist, essayist, satirist and critic of culture H.L. Mencken who made the following sage observation: "Strike an average between what a woman thinks of her husband a month before she marries him and what she thinks of him a year afterward, and you will have the truth about him."

■ It may seem odd, but the Drug Enforcement Agency supports, in a fashion, a publication that advocates the legalization of cannabis; the DEA has three subscriptions to the magazine High Times.

■ There was a time when cartoon character Fred Flintstone appeared in ads for Winston cigarettes.

■ In an anthropological study once conducted in Papua New Guinea, it was found that one in three adult deaths were the result of homicide. And it seems that those murdered were often targeted because they were suspected of practicing sorcery.

■ There seems to be quite a rivalry between the towns of Rosehill, N.C., and Wilmington, Del. Both locales claim to be the home of the world's largest frying pan, with a diameter of 10 feet. This begs some questions, of course: How many eggs are being fried at once to require such a large piece of cookware? And what sort of stove is required to heat such a mammoth pan?

■ In today's troubled economic times, you might not be surprised to learn that in his famed "Devil's Dictionary," Ambrose Bierce defined a corporation as "an ingenious device for obtaining individual profit without individual responsibility."

■ According to estimates made by United Nations researchers, approximately 25 languages became extinct in 2008, meaning the last native speaker had passed away.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "Democracy consists of choosing your dictators, after they've told you what you think it is you want to hear."—Alan Corenk

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MAGIC MAZE ● GROUCHO MARX QUOTES

P	U	Q	N	K	T	H	E	B	Y	V	S	P	M	J
H	E	B	Y	V	T	E	Q	O	L	I	G	D	B	Y
W	T	R	P	M	K	I	G	F	E	D	B	G	Y	W
U	S	Q	O	M	K	C	I	R	R	F	D	N	B	Z
R	X	W	U	T	N	A	T	R	O	P	M	I	I	S
Q	U	O	N	L	R	S	J	H	F	F	F	H	Y	D
C	N	O	I	T	P	E	C	X	E	N	A	T	A	N
A	Y	W	Y	L	V	T	V	S	B	V	F	E	S	I
Q	P	N	D	A	L	G	L	E	E	K	A	M	O	T
K	I	H	F	E	C	B	B	Z	N	Y	C	O	T	U
W	V	U	S	R	K	A	E	P	S	I	E	S	Q	B

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

I never (clue answer) a face, but in your case I'll be glad to make an exception. Before I speak, I have something important to say.

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	+		÷		8
÷		x		x	
	–		x		10
+		x		+	
	x		–		18
11		21		16	

1 2 3 3 5 6 7 8 9

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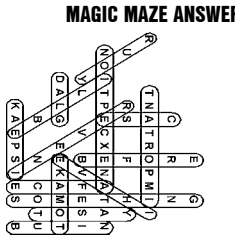
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GROUCHO MARX QUOTES

GO FIGURE ANSWER

9	+	7	x	2	8
÷		x		x	
3	–	1	x	5	10
+		x		+	
8	x	3	–	6	18
11		21		16	

Valentine wishes in a box

Let surprise love notes spill out from a box this Valentine's Day to show your kids how much you care. Or get the whole family involved in the crafting and help your kids create this unique and easy-to-make valentine for someone special in their lives. All you need is a small, empty valentine candy box, paper, ribbon, scissors, markers, tape, glue and an extra dose of sweet thoughts to share.

Here's how:

Start with a small- or medium-size heart-shaped chocolate candy box. Paint or cover the box lid with construction paper and write, "I love you because ..." on the top.

Cut out a heart shape from a piece of paper or index card so that the shape fits perfectly inside the box. Remove it from the box and use it as a pattern to make a heart-shaped paper garland.

Using the heart pattern, trace and cut out about 10 identical heart shapes from construction paper. On one side of each heart, write a different reason why you love the recipient of your valentine. For example: "You tell funny jokes," "Your smile makes everyone happy," "You give big hugs," "You are a great helper" or "You are kind."

Once you have written the words on each heart, turn them over and line them up in a horizontal row on a table. Lay a length of ribbon across the middle point of all of the hearts, leaving an extra inch of ribbon dangling over the left side and 5 inches over the right side. Glue the ribbon to the hearts to connect them. Let dry.

Tape the 1-inch ribbon end inside the base of the box. Accordion-fold the hearts and set them inside. The longer ribbon will be on top. Thread a bead onto the ribbon and knot, if you wish. Place the lid on the box. Tie a ribbon around it and give it to someone special on Valentine's Day. When the box is opened, the person can pull the ribbon to reveal all of the heartfelt expressions.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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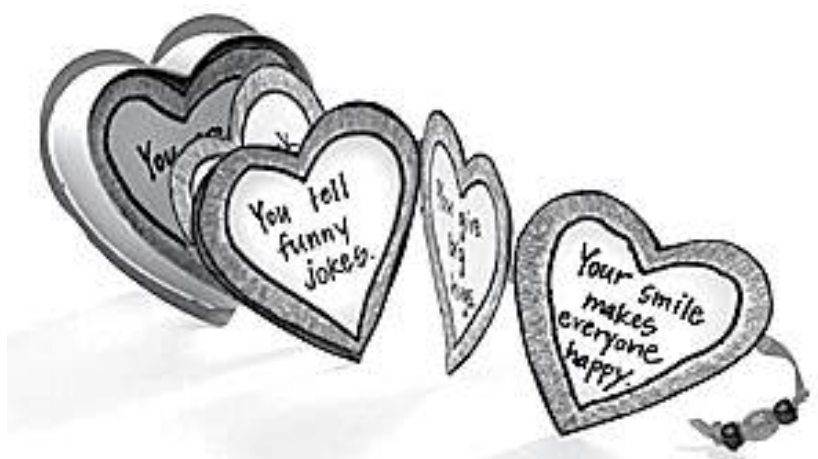

Life & Style

From kids to Obama, nation marks Lincoln's 200th

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP)—Folksy, melancholy Abraham Lincoln would have been dumbfounded by the fuss over his birthday Thursday.

Bells tolled, wreaths were laid, speeches intoned and banjos picked to mark the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth in a Kentucky log cabin. At the Lincoln presidential museum in Springfield, hundreds of excited schoolchildren joined in reciting the 16th president's Gettysburg Address—an attempt to break the record for the biggest worldwide crowd reading it aloud together.

"I got up at 4:30 this morning to be here!" said Emma Bradford, a 9-year-old fourth-grader from the Chicago suburb of Barrington. "Abraham Lincoln is my idol."

Bookended by a log cabin and a replica White House, Lincoln impersonator Michael Krebs of Chicago and Gov. Pat Quinn led the reading of the famed speech. Officials hoped 300,000 Abe fans around the world would join in to break the record of 223,363.

"We were blessed by God to have Abraham Lincoln at a crucial time in our country's history," Quinn said. "We have to be ambassadors from the Land of Lincoln to the whole world to make sure that Abraham Lincoln's memory is always with us."

Lincoln festivities were a hot ticket.

"Everyone wants to have something to do with it," said Anjali Baiju, a 10-year-old Springfield fifth-grader, whose mother was 5 when she emigrated from India.

"He didn't try to be all fancy. He just wanted to be himself and he wanted everyone to have equal rights," Anjali said.

Church bells rang from Springfield—where Lincoln was a state legislator and successful lawyer before moving to the White House—to points as far-flung as Vermont. Wreaths were laid in Hodgenville, Ky., where Lincoln was born, and the Spencer County, Ind., grave of his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln.

Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C., where an assassin felled Lincoln in April 1865, celebrated his birthday with performances of Lincoln's great speeches. In Owensboro, Ky., the president's life was set to bluegrass in the style of another famous native son, musician Bill Monroe.

At Gilson Brown Elementary School in the Mississippi River town of Alton, where one of Lincoln's game-changing 1858 senatorial debates with Stephen Douglas took place, students signed a monstrous pro-Lincoln banner in the cafeteria.

The U.S. Senate approved a resolution honoring Lincoln, and Sen. Roland Burris, D-Ill., urged Americans to "draw on Lincoln's legacy and move forward" during this time of economic turmoil.

AP

Ankeith Guntupalli, 6, left, of Springfield and Gabriel Benner of Chicago recite the Gettysburg Address during a simultaneous nationwide reading at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield, Ill. on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2009. According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the record for most people reading aloud simultaneously is 223,363 participants. Officials won't know if the record was broken until they tally entrants.

Nude photo of Madonna auctioned for $37,500 in NYC

NEW YORK (AP)—A full-frontal, nude photo of a 20-year-old Madonna fetched $37,500 at auction Thursday, an apparent record auction price for a photograph of the superstar singer.

An unnamed European buyer bought the picture, which had been expected to sell for up to $15,000, according to Christie's auction house.

Madonna, then known as Madonna Louise Ciccone, was a dancer trying to make ends meet when she answered a newspaper ad seeking a nude model. She may have earned as little as $25 for the 1979 photo session.

Lee Friedlander's raw, explicit black-and-white image appeared in Playboy in 1985. Friedlander has said of the photo session that Madonna "seemed very confident, a street-wise girl. She told me she was putting a band together but half the kids that age are doing that. She was a good professional model."

Madonna

The photograph auctioned Thursday was one of six from that shoot that appeared in Playboy; the other five pictures were sold together in 2003 for $7,170.

A Herb Ritts photo of Madonna's "True Blue" album cover, which sold for more than $15,000 in 2006, is the most expensive photograph of the singer to sell previously at auction, Christie's said.

Another photograph of Madonna, by Helmut Newton, sold Thursday for $18,750, beating a $15,000 estimate. In that shot, also sold to Playboy in the 1980s, Madonna sports lingerie, curly blond hair and a seductive expression. A man kneels beside her.

The Madonna photos were among 150 images, by some of the biggest names in photography, auctioned from the collection of Leon and Michaela Constantiner. They feature fashion and other celebrity icons.

The sale fetched more than $900,000 in all, including a top price of $242,500 for "Sie Kommen," Newton's images of nude models for the Italian and French versions of Vogue in the 1980s.

American Idol semifinalist disqualified

LOS ANGELES (AP)—An "American Idol" contestant with a lengthy entertainment resume has been disqualified after reaching the show's top 36.

In its press released issued Wednesday night announcing the semifinalists, Fox TV said that Joanna Pacitti was "ineligible to continue." No reason was given by Fox.

But a person familiar with the decision said Thursday that Pacitti was dropped to avoid any appearance of business impropriety. The person, who did not elaborate, spoke on condition of anonymity because the person was not authorized by Fox and the show's producers to talk about the dismissal.

The decision was made because Pacitti had once worked with a person subsequently hired by 19 Entertainment, which produces "American Idol" with FremantleMedia, said another person familiar with the disqualification. Pacitti also knew a second 19 Entertainment employee, the person said.

Pacitti was dropped from the show to avoid any suggestion of unfairness, said the person, who asked that his or her name not be used because the person was not authorized to talk about the dismissal.

Felicia Barton of Virginia Beach, Va., replaced Pacitti, a Philadelphia native, in the top 36.

The show announced the semifinalists Wednesday night, then later released an update saying it had cut Pacitti loose and subbed in Barton, a 26-year-old married mom.

Efforts were made to contact Pacitti, 23, by telephone and through "American Idol," but she could not be immediately reached for comment.

A few of the contestants in Tuesday night's episode, including Pacitti, flubbed the lyrics but made it through to the next round.

Pacitti, who auditioned in Louisville, Ky., entered "Idol" as anything but an ingenue. She had a record deal with Geffen and released an album in 2006. Billboard reports it sold more than 16,000 copies.

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Friday The 13th
Friday 4:20 7:05 10:00
Sat & Sun 1:05 4:20 7:05 10:00
Monday 1:05 4:20 7:05
Tuesday 4:20 7:05
Jared Padalecki, Amanda Righetti
Horror, Remake • Rated R
Synopsis
Clay searches for his missing sister in the eerie woods of legendary Crystal Lake, where he stumbles on the creaky remains of rotting old cabins behind moss-covered trees. And that's not the only thing lying in wait under the brush. Against the advice of police and cautions from the locals, Clay pursues what few leads he has, with the help of a young woman he meets among a group of college kids up for an all-thrills weekend.

★ ★ ★

Pink Panther 2
Friday 4:10 7:10 9:30
Sat & Sun 1:15 4:10 7:10 9:30
Monday 1:15 4:10 7:10
Tuesday 4:10 7:10
Steve Martin, Andy Garcia
Comedy, Mystery • Rated PG
Synopsis
The continuing adventures of Inspector Jacques Clouseau. When legendary treasures from around the world are stolen, including the priceless Pink Panther Diamond, Chief Inspector Dreyfus (John Cleese) is forced to assign Clouseau to a team of international detectives and experts charged with cathcing the thief and retrieving the stolen artifacts.

Ang Tanging Ina N'yong Lahat
Friday 4:25 7:20 9:50
Sat & Sun 1:30 4:25 7:20 9:50
Monday 1:30 4:25 7:20
Tuesday 4:25 7:20
Ai-Ai de las Alas, Eugene Domingo
Comedy • Rated PG
Synopsis
With the one, big, happy family that she has, any woman would admire Ina Montecillo (Ai-Ai de las Alas) as the embodiment of a perfect mother. But after more than 40 years of doing everything for her family, she realizes she hasn't done anything for herself. Ina then embarks on a journey of finding her self-worth that surprisingly lands her as the president of the Philippines!

Push
Friday 4:15 7:30 9:40
Sat & Sun 1:10 4:15 7:30 9:40
Monday 1:10 4:15 7:30
Tuesday 4:15 7:30
Chris Evans, Dakota Fanning
Thriller Supernatural • Rated PG 13

Coraline
Friday 4:05 7:25 9:35
Sat & Sun 1:20 4:05 7:25 9:35
Monday 1:20 4:05 7:25
Tuesday 4:05 7:25
Dakota Fanning, John Hodgman
Fantasy, Animated • Rated PG

Taken
Friday 4:30 7:15 9:55
Sat & Sun 1:25 4:30 7:15 9:55
Monday 1:25 4:30 7:15
Tuesday 4:30 7:15
Liam Neeson, Maggie Grace
Action, Drama, Thriller • Rated PG 13

He's Just Not That Into You
Friday 4:00 7:00 9:45
Sat & Sun 1:00 4:00 7:00 9:45
Monday 1:00 4:00 7:00
Tuesday 4:00 7:00
Jennifer Aniston, Scarlett Johansson
Romatic Comedy • Rated PG 13

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Beyonce, Hudson win Image Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—It was a dreamy night for a couple of "Dreamgirls." Beyonce and Jennifer Hudson both glided away with trophies Thursday and wowed the audience with individual performances during the 40th annual NAACP Image Awards.

Beyonce won the female artist category while Husdon picked up the new artist award. They costarred in the 2006 film "Dreamgirls."

"This is where we come from," Hudson said, accepting the trophy. "So it's always an honor to come home and feel welcome and to feel the love. I really cherish this and appreciate it."

Along with Beyonce and Hudson, will.i.am and Seal performed on stage at the Shrine Auditorium ceremony, which was hosted by actress Halle Berry and actor-screenwriter Tyler Perry. The show coincides with the 100th anniversary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and kicks off a yearlong centennial celebration.

"The Secret Life of Bees" won for motion picture. "Grey's Anatomy" won for TV drama. Several of the winners were awarded before the live ceremony, including Chandra Wilson from "Grey's Anatomy" for actress in a drama series, Columbus Short from "Cadillac Records" for supporting actor in a motion picture and singer-actor Jamie Foxx for male artist.

AP

Beyonce accepts the award for outstanding female artist at the 40th NAACP Image Awards on Thursday, Feb. 12, 2009,in Los Angeles.

Chris Brown, who's accused in a domestic dispute that reportedly involves pop superstar Rihanna, was up against Foxx with Common, John Legend and will.i.am for the male artist trophy. Rihanna was competing against Beyonce with Alicia Keys, Jennifer Hudson and Mariah Carey for the female artist award. Neither Brown or Rihanna were in attendance.

Sean "Diddy" Combs picked up the TV movie actor trophy for his role in "A Raisin in the Sun." Other acting winners included Hill Harper for "CSI: NY," Tracee Ellis Ross for "Girlfriends," Taraji P. Henson for "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" and Will Smith and Rosario Dawson for "Seven Pounds."

The awards honor achievements and performances of people of color in TV, film, music and literature. Former Vice President Al Gore and Kenyan activist Wangari Maathai received the Chairman's Award. Boxing legend Muhammad Ali won the President's Award. Hip-hop mogul Russell Simmons was given the Vanguard Award.

"I discovered that giving made me happy," Simmons said during his acceptance speech alongside daughters Ming and Aoki, who precariously held up his trophy and counted down his remaining speech time. "As you get older, that's the easy route, so it's always been such an easy thing. It seems kinda crazy to be honored for it."

Usher's wife recovering after cardiac arrest

SAO PAULO (AP)—The wife of R&B singer Usher continues to recover in a Sao Paulo hospital after suffering a cardiac arrest shortly before undergoing plastic surgery, the spokeswoman of the doctor who was to perform the procedure said Thursday.

Ellen Dastry, spokeswoman for plastic surgeon Silvio Sterman, says Tameka Raymond checked into the Sao Rafael Hospital last Friday for a "simple liposuction." Dastry said that Raymond suffered a cardiac arrest while being anesthetized for the procedure "but was revived in less than a minute by heart massage." She was then placed in an induced coma before being taken to the intensive-care unit, a procedure Dastry said was "absolutely normal" and performed in order to "avoid unnecessary complications."

That same day Raymond was transferred to Sao Paulo's posh and better-equipped Sirio-Libanes Hospital where she is recovering, Dastry said without providing further details.

At Sirio-Libanes, a spokeswoman would only say that Raymond remains hospitalized. She explained that Raymond's family requested that no information regarding her condition be divulged by the hospital. She did not give her name, per hospital rules. Usher was supposed to perform at music mogul Clive Davis' pre-Grammy party last Saturday, but backed out to come to Brazil to be with his wife.

The 30-year-old R&B star and his wife were married in August 2007. They have two young sons, 2-year-old Usher Raymond V and 2-month-old Naveid Ely Raymond.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

More waiting likely in Chris Brown case

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Prosecutors say they don't expect charges will be filed against singer Chris Brown this week in an alleged domestic-violence case. The Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office requested that police provide more information about an incident in which Brown reportedly hurt his longtime girlfriend, fellow singer Rihanna. District Attorney spokeswoman Jane Robison said Thursday that the office does not expect detectives to return to present their case this week. Brown was arrested Sunday on suspicion of making a criminal threat and is free on $50,000 bail. Numerous messages left for his attorney and spokesman have not been returned. Police have several weeks to build their case if necessary. Robison said a March 5 court date that appears on jail records only applies if the 19-year-old R&B singer is charged with a crime.

Life of Anna Nicole Smith to get opera treatment

LONDON (AP)—The fine line between opera and soap opera just got blurrier. Britain's august Royal Opera said Thursday it is planning a show based on the life of Anna Nicole Smith, the model and stripper who married an octogenarian oil tycoon, starred in her own TV show and died of a drug overdose in 2007. The company says the show will have music by respected British composer Mark-Anthony Turnage. The libretto is by Richard Thomas, co-creator of "Jerry Springer: The Opera," an earlier merger of highbrow and lowbrow culture. It is due to run in the Royal Opera's 2011 season. The company's director of opera, Elaine Padmore, told The Guardian newspaper the show "is not going to be tawdry; it is going to be witty, clever, thoughtful and sad." "It is not just a documentary about her, but a parable about celebrity and what it does to people," she said.

NY's blind governor: 'SNL' insensitive to disabled

MORRISVILLE, N.Y. (AP)—The legally blind governor of New York says a second parody of him on the television show "Saturday Night Live" promotes insensitivity against the disabled. Democratic Gov. David Paterson said Thursday that the show's continued parodies hurt disabled people not in a position to fight back. A segment on Paterson aired last week featured "SNL" cast member Fred Armisen—with one eye closed most of the time, the other focused on his own nose—unable to see fellow cast member Seth Meyers or a prop. Armisen portrayed the governor as a clueless blind man with a past of youthful drug use and womanizing. NBC spokeswoman Sharon Pannozzo says neither the network nor the show would comment on Paterson's remarks.

Yes cancels concert dates through Feb. 24

DENVER (AP)—The classic rock band Yes has canceled all concert dates through Feb. 24 because of unspecified medical reasons. The band, whose hits include "I've Seen All Good People" and "Owner of a Lonely Heart," was scheduled to play Thursday night at Denver's Paramount Theatre. Yes released a statement Thursday saying it was canceling the shows, citing "unforeseen" medical reasons, but it didn't give further details. Its Web site said a radio performance Wednesday also had been canceled. Frontman Jon Anderson suffered a severe asthma attack last May, was diagnosed with acute respiratory failure and was ordered by doctors to rest. Yes initially canceled their 40th anniversary tour in the summer 2008, because of the illness of its lead singer, but then decided to relaunch it.

Valentine wishes are meant to be shared far and wide

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I clearly remember my first Valentine's Day. I was in first grade. A few days before, my mom asked how many kids were in my class, and we went to a store and bought large packages of valentines—one for every child in the class. The cards were all the same size and said, basically, the same thing.

When I arrived at school, each classmate had a small box on his or her desk. At some point during the day, I went around the room and gave each child a valentine. There was one for the quiet one in the back, the most popular girl in class, the prettiest and even the boys. This was long before society taught me that such a show of affection had to exclude people of the same gender as me. By the end of the day, everyone had a full box of valentines to take home.

One desk, one box ... the love of a child.

As I grew older, society taught me to narrow my offering of affection, picking only those I chose to be special or worthy. Eventually, I was taught to limit my valentines to only one person. More time went on, and then a card was not enough. To show that really special person what she meant to you, you needed to send flowers, candy and jewelry.

Apparently, as we grew older it took more and more to fill those boxes. Now we absolutely could not give to more than one person. People hire detectives to make sure that the person isn't filling anyone else's. And if you had no one to send you anything, you were saddened by your big, empty box filled only with sadness and despair.

Today, I am taking back from society what it has taken from me. I'm counting how many people play a role in my life, and I am buying "virtual" packages of cards. I have one for every single one of you—man or woman, young or old, straight or gay, married or single. Each card is the same size, they all say the same thing—that I appreciate who you are and what you have to contribute to each other.

I invite each and every one to do the same, so that no box is empty and the shy ones, the pretty ones, the popular ones and those who are less so go home tonight with a full box of valentines.

One virtual desk, one virtual box, and the love of a child at heart. I wish you all a happy Valentine's Day.

ERIC IN LOS ALAMITOS, CALIF.

DEAR ERIC: Your letter touched me—and I am sure that everyone who reads it wishes the same for you.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I'm being married in a few weeks—my third marriage, his first. We live together and keep our finances separate, which works for us. We intend to keep things that way after the wedding.

My problem is I want to keep my maiden name, and my fiance wants me to adopt his. Having been divorced twice, I speak from experience when I say what a pain it is to change one's name on checking accounts, credit cards, etc. I love my fiance and believe he's the man I'll grow old with, but I would like to keep my name.

Am I being selfish, or have you any thoughts as to how I can keep "me" on paper and still make my future husband happy?

HAD IT WITH ALIASES IN NORTH CAROLINA

DEAR HAD IT: Believe me, I do sympathize with your dilemma. However, I have a question: Which is more important to you—the hassle you'll go through one more time, or your fiance's feelings? Let the answer be your guide.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

GIVE ME BACK MY NOTES, YOU LITTLE CREEP!
RUN! RUN!
WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? SHE'LL KILL US!
INTO THE BATHROOM!
LOCK THE DOOR! QUICK!
CALVIN!
CLICK
OPEN THIS DOOR, OR YOUR PARENTS WILL NEVER FIND YOUR REMAINS!
BOY, SOME BABY SITTER!
HERE GO YOUR NOTES!
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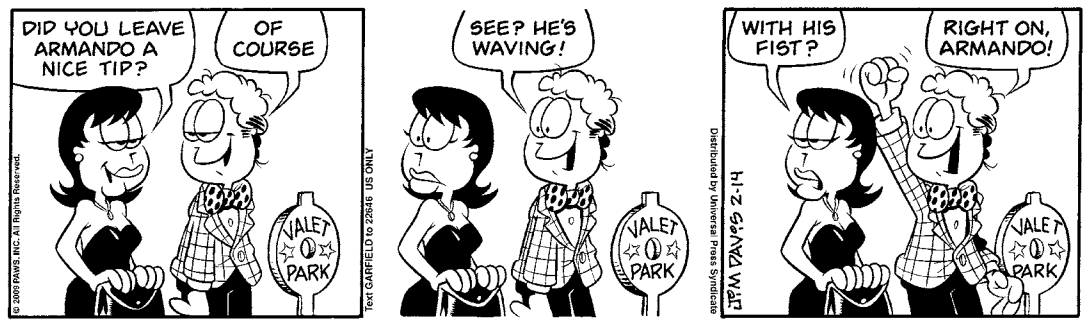
2/14

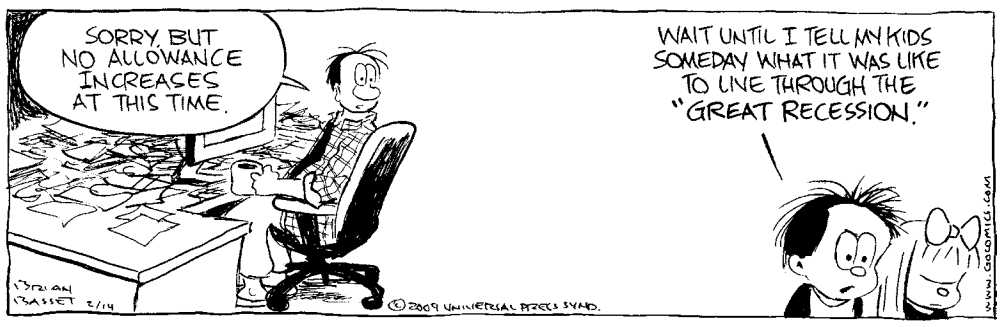
Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


SORRY, BUT NO ALLOWANCE INCREASES AT THIS TIME.
WAIT UNTIL I TELL MY KIDS SOMEDAY WHAT IT WAS LIKE TO LIVE THROUGH THE "GREAT RECESSION."
BRIAN BASSET 2/14
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www.adamathome.com

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

MY PARENTS ARE RENEWING THEIR WEDDING VOWS.
HOW SWEET.
NOT REALLY.
MY MOM JUST NOTICED THAT MY DAD HAD PENCILED IN AN EXPIRATION DATE ON THE MARRIAGE LICENSE.
2007 © Glenn McCoy/Dist. by Universal Press Syndicate
GLENN MCCOY

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Clear the decks?
5 "Hey, you!"
9 Trail the pack
12 Singer Vikki
13 Canyon comeback
14 Anger
15 Initial stake
16 2008 bailout acronym
17 Perch
18 Whatever remains
19 Honest politician
20 11-Down's genre
21 Pitch
23 Sci-fi doctor
25 Removed, as a cap
28 Indicate
32 Preclude
33 Pursuing
34 "Jeopardy!" stock-in-trade
36 Internet icon
37 Embarrassed
38 Calif. neighbor
39 Genealogy chart
42 Answer to the Sphinx's riddle
44 Say you will, or won't, be there
48 A billion years
49 Old Italian money
50 Foil's kin
51 Autumn mo.
52 Exam format
53 Broadcasts
54 Pigs' digs
55 Entanglements
56 Golden Rule word

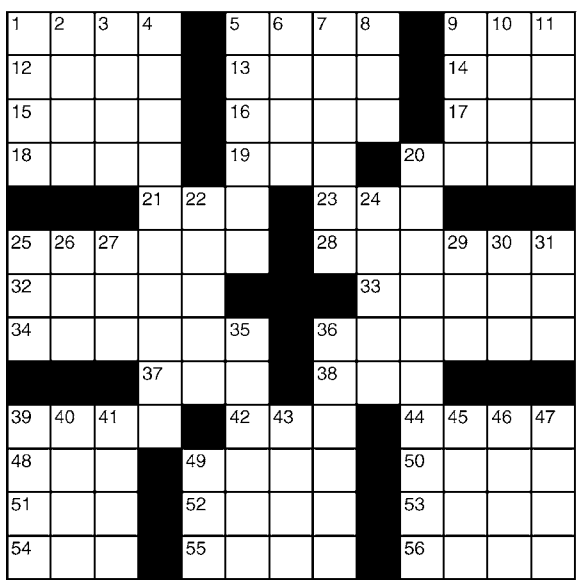
DOWN

1 "Lion King" baddie
2 Recede
3 — and crafts
4 Long-time Packers QB
5 Loud firework
6 Wound cover
7 Cunning
8 Surpass
9 Simpson or Kudrow
10 Four Corners st.
11 Musician Stan
20 "Iron Man" director
22 Raptor's roost
24 Toss hard
25 Banned bug spray
26 "— the ramparts ..."
27 Justice Dept. div.
29 Mel of Cooperstown
30 Afternoon affair
31 Mess up
35 Regard highly
36 Historical records
39 Sawbucks
40 Cheer
41 Jealousy
43 Speedy steed
45 "Wheel of Fortune" option
46 Perp. to hor.
47 100 centavos
49 Despondent

Solution time: 27 mins.

J	I	M	■	T	W	I	N	■	B	A	S	S
A	N	A	■	H	A	L	O	■	L	I	L	Y
M	A	K	E	O	V	E	R	■	A	N	O	N
■	■	■	E	A	S	Y	■	■	A	Z	T	E	C
W	A	S	T	E	■	B	A	R	E	■	■	■
E	M	U	S	■	S	U	P	E	R	M	A	N
P	A	R	■	J	U	D	E	A	■	A	L	A
T	H	E	B	I	R	D	S	■	S	K	I	S
■	■	■	A	N	D	Y	■	D	O	E	T	H
B	R	O	N	X	■	■	S	W	I	G	■	■
L	O	K	I	■	M	A	K	E	L	O	V	E
A	I	R	S	■	O	D	I	E	■	O	I	L
B	L	A	H	■	I	A	M	B	■	D	E	F

Yesterday's answer 2-14



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Drew Bledsoe, 37; Meg Tilly, 49; Florence Henderson, 75; Hugh Downs, 88

Happy Birthday: If there is something you want, grab it and hold on tight. Now is your chance for the happiness that has eluded you in the past. Someone of importance to you will make a difference to your future if you make the first move. This year is about mixing the past with the future. Your numbers are 7, 10, 19, 23, 28, 39, 40

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Impulsive actions will be costly. Problems while traveling will cause delays and can affect your well-being. Focus more on what you can do for others and you will reap the highest returns. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Don't base what you have to do on what others say. Reach inside and discover what really matters to you. A change is in the stars and your best response is to move on. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): This is a great time to explore new avenues, learn a new trade or make a move that will enhance your chances of getting ahead. Past acquaintances will be of help now, so don't hesitate to reconnect. A short trip will pay off. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Don't let an old love cause problems in your current relationship. Being pushy or having to deal with someone who is will be upsetting. Before you get all wrapped up in the melodrama, be an observer instead of a participant. ✪✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You may have taken on too much. Relying on someone you have partnered with will help but it won't fix the long-term problem. Express the way you feel. Good suggestions will be offered and can lead to a workable solution. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Investments must be based on facts and figures, not emotions and hearsay. Fast-cash schemes will lead to losses. This is not the time to invest in others or to make changes, unless it is sizing down or setting a strict budget. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): You'll be given the means to make considerable changes that will alter your personal life. Children will have an impact and so will someone from your past. Put time aside for the ones you love and discuss future plans. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Your emotions will be difficult to control. You have much to digest and to do if you want to stay afloat. Be willing to change your lifestyle in order to maintain what you have and to be fair to the people who have given you so much in the past. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Home, friends and family will be what count. Someone from your past will have a suggestion or proposal you cannot turn down. Don't let your own uncertainty hold you back. It's a new day. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Don't let love get you down. Show compassion and understanding but don't give in to unreasonable demands. Now is not the time to show your emotions. Listen but refrain from making a decision or promise. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You are right on target and ready to get on with your life. The developments that have occurred will enable you to make a go of something you've always wanted to do. Consider how you can implement the past with the present. A partnership looks good. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Keep things to yourself and you will avoid setbacks. Don't let someone else's uncertainty be your concern or stand in your way. A pushy person may try to lead you in the wrong direction. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are a giver, a lover and a just and fair person. You offer solutions, good advice and honest opinions from an unusual perspective.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	1			6			4	
3			1		4	7		2
	8							
	3						9	
7				2				3
	6						5	
							8	
4		8	3		9			5
	5			4			7	

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/14

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	1	2	9	8	7	4	5	3
3	4	8	1	5	2	6	9	7
5	9	7	3	4	6	2	1	8
2	7	4	8	3	1	9	6	5
9	3	6	2	7	5	8	4	1
8	5	1	4	6	9	7	3	2
7	2	9	5	1	4	3	8	6
1	6	3	7	9	8	5	2	4
4	8	5	6	2	3	1	7	9

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/13

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

SYMBOLS OF VALENTINE'S DAY **Solution: 5 letters**

C	N	T	H	E	S	E	S	O	R	S	E	N	D	L
D	O	E	R	S	C	A	T	A	M	O	R	E	Y	P
E	I	N	T	U	I	N	R	R	M	A	E	R	D	A
V	S	A	F	T	T	R	A	D	I	T	I	O	N	S
O	S	O	M	E	I	H	E	D	I	C	A	R	E	S
T	E	Y	N	O	C	R	H	H	S	N	I	S	L	I
I	R	G	T	G	N	T	W	A	C	B	N	W	A	O
O	P	R	I	I	S	D	I	D	B	K	M	E	M	N
N	X	N	E	F	R	N	S	O	N	O	C	E	R	C
R	E	(L)	O	T	T	U	N	I	N	A	W	T	O	U
R	O	(O)	I	T	T	S	P	G	N	E	H	S	F	P
D	O	(V)	E	A	E	E	I	D	S	D	R	A	C	I
S	A	(E)	D	I	M	S	L	L	O	B	M	Y	S	D
Y	R	A	U	R	B	E	F	L	O	W	E	R	S	W
D	R	A	C	T	S	O	P	E	R	S	O	N	A	L

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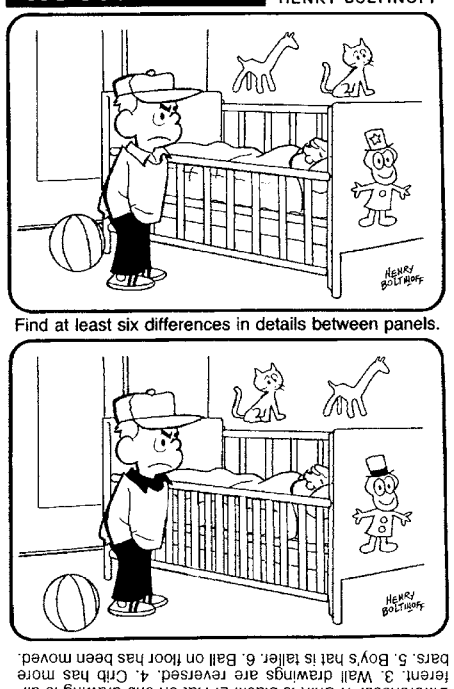
Amore, Bows, Candles, Cards, Care, Charms, Cherish, Confectionery, Cupid, Dance, Devotion, Diamonds, Dinner, Dove, Dream, E-mail, Expression, February, Flowers, Formal, Gifts, Handwritten, Hearts, Ideas, Letter, Love, Lyrics, Notes, Passion, Personal, Pink, Poem, Postcard, Purity, Ribbons, Roses, Saint, Send, Sign, Songs, Sweets, Symbol, Traditions, Truth

Yesterday's Answer: Literature

We listened to your requests! TREASURY #6 is the first-ever Wonderword book containing only 20 x 20 puzzles, with 75 of these large puzzles. To order, send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 p&h ($14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume. $1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Wonderword, Universal Press Syndicate, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo. 64106 or call toll-free 1-800-642-6480. Order online at upuzzles.com.

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

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Differences: 1. Shirt is black. 2. Hat on crib drawing is different. 3. Wall drawings are reversed. 4. Crib has more bars. 5. Boy's hat is taller. 6. Ball on floor has been moved.

Wishing Well®

2	6	3	4	5	3	7	6	8	6	8	3	6
C	Y	A	G	Y	R	S	O	T	U	H	T	G
2	8	6	8	6	3	7	4	3	7	4	5	6
H	I	A	N	I	I	E	O	S	R	A	O	N
4	2	7	2	7	3	2	6	4	6	7	8	5
H	O	V	I	E	T	C	A	E	P	O	K	U
3	8	2	7	6	4	6	2	6	8	2	6	3
I	B	E	T	P	A	R	S	O	E	A	V	C
8	2	3	6	8	4	3	8	6	7	2	8	5
F	R	V	A	O	D	E	R	L	H	E	E	W
7	5	7	3	2	7	3	5	3	5	8	3	5
E	I	R	N	M	S	T	L	U	L	Y	R	E
3	2	5	2	5	8	2	8	5	8	5	8	8
E	A	X	D	C	O	E	U	E	A	L	C	T

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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Super Crossword

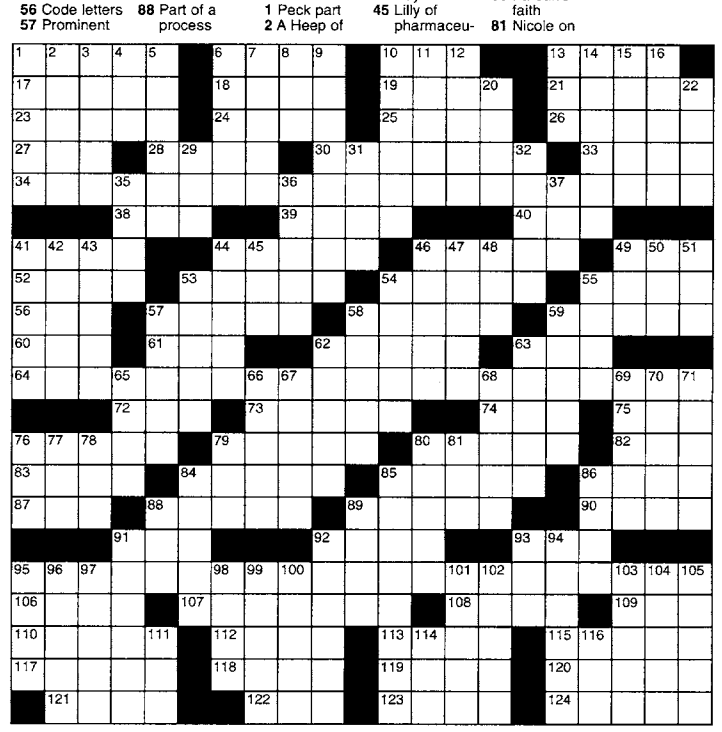
STRIKE ONE!

ACROSS

1 Resembling Hatch?
6 Lowdown lit
10 Small shot
13 Ellipse
17 Prompts
18 Sheet of stamps
19 — League
21 Send payment
23 Buenos —
24 Computer image
25 Non-stereo
26 Praise for Pavarotti
27 "Norma —" ('79 film)
28 Bruins' sch.
30 "Ada" author
33 List entry
34 Start of a remark by Will Rogers
38 Author LeShan
39 About
40 Very cold
41 Mets' milieu
44 Artist Neiman
46 Steakhouse order
49 Kasbah cap
52 Printed matter
53 Hook on a hawk
54 Wall Street spoilers
55 Poi base
56 Code letters
57 Prominent
58 Gardener's delight
59 So out it's in
60 Bow
61 Playground game
62 Uncool ones
63 Who stoops to conquer
64 Middle of remark
72 Snaky swimmer
73 Actor Lorenzo
74 Logical letters
75 "Knots Landing" character
76 Yankee Derek
79 Nickel creature
80 Toughen up
82 Dachshund declaration
83 Surrounded by
84 Dedicated to defamation
85 Laotian native
86 "La Boheme" seamstress
87 Lave the linoleum
88 Part of a process
89 Black piano key
90 Spirit
91 — Lanka
92 Mutt of mystery
93 — -relief
95 End of remark
106 Corner a cat
107 Indy 500 figure
108 Actress Freeman
109 Fury's food
110 Destined to diet
112 Lost
113 Ultimate whale watcher?
115 Former African nation
117 Actress Marisa
118 Garr of "Mr. Mom"
119 Theater section
120 New York city
121 Salamander
122 57 Across, e.g.
123 Look like a letch
124 Com. treaty

DOWN

1 Peck part
2 A Heep of Dickens
3 Come around
4 Look at
5 Sent out
6 Like some milk
7 Jungle bird
8 Top numero
9 "In Memoriam" poet
10 Hefty grass
11 Witch wheels?
12 Low-octane joe?
13 Sphere
14 Prove
15 Famed figure in fiddles
16 Bile producer
20 Opus
22 Magnum opus
29 R.E. Lee's govt.
31 Part of DA
32 Scores in ores
35 Best
36 Hitter Hank
37 Sail through
41 Scarecrow stuffing
42 Monsieur Matisse
43 Precise
44 A particular Key
45 Lilly of pharmaceuticals
46 Mans the bar
47 Met men
48 Rossini's "Le Comte —"
49 Some trimmings
50 Bungle
51 Gnus center?
53 Seek out a school?
54 Conifer coverings
55 Really rain
57 Sleek swimmer
58 Some kind of a nut
59 — Island
62 "In Search of . . ." host
63 Unyielding
65 Pay attention to
66 Opens the mail
67 Discernment
68 Hunker down
69 Serve a purpose
70 Fate
71 Impish
76 Berry sweet stuff?
77 Funny Philips
78 Inside info
79 Herd word
80 Farouk's faith
81 Nicole on "Fame"
84 Exercises the arms
85 "— is said and done"
86 A real butte
88 Expert
89 Tennis legend
91 Playground feature
92 Reach
93 Prohibition
94 Woman warrior
95 Subway station
96 Papal name
97 "Superman" star
98 Coup d'—
99 Desert refuges
100 Jacques, for one
101 Effigy
102 Like a judge
103 Man of steal?
104 Jeweler's weight
105 African scavenger
111 Tolkien creation
114 Form furrows
116 Cookbook phrase



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Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. TELEVISION: What was the name of the robot in the comedy series "Get Smart"?
2. MEDICINE: Who is credited with discovering a vaccine for measles?
3. LITERATURE: What famous author also wrote under the pseudonym of Tex Burns?
4. HISTORY: Who was the United States' first chief justice of the Supreme Court?
5. BUSINESS: What is AT&T's stock ticker symbol?
6. GEOGRAPHY: What African country lies directly west of Sudan?
7. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: How many lines are in a sonnet?
8. GAMES: How many cards are used in pinochle?
9. U.S. STATES: Which state would you hail from if you were called a "Tar Heel"?
10. FAMOUS QUOTES: Who once said, "He taught me housekeeping; when I divorce I keep the house"?

Answers

1. Hymie
2. John F. Enders and Thomas Peebles
3. Louis L'Amour
4. John Jay
5. T
6. Chad
7. 14
8. 48
9. North Carolina
10. Zsa Zsa Gabor

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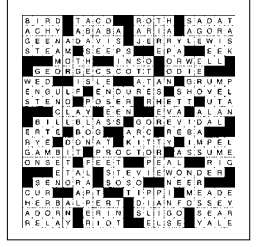
Saturday's Answers



POPEYE
HEY EISMAN
THIS IS PERFECT, BRUTUS...
...THE FULFILLMENT OF ALL YOUR DREAMS...
I DON'T KNOW WHY I DIDN'T THINK OF THIS BEFORE!
I'LL ENGAGE POPEYE IN A CONVERSATION...
...AND YOU COME UP BEHIND HIM AND...
HAW
OH POPEYE DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO RECYCLE CANS?
SURE I DUZ
TH' TOWN DUMP!
WHERE IS THAT?
IT'S BACK THAT WAY!
OOPS!
SORRY, BRUTUS, I DIN'T KNOW YA WUZ THERE!
@*&!! FOILED AGAIN!
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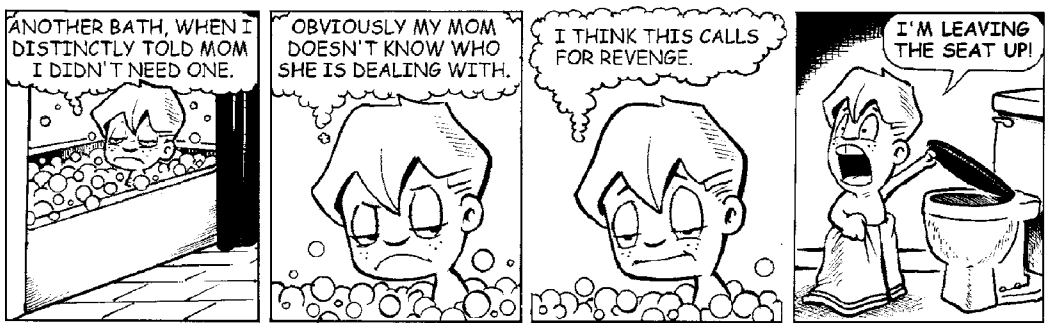
Amber Waves by Dave T. Phipps


ANOTHER BATH, WHEN I DISTINCTLY TOLD MOM I DIDN'T NEED ONE.
OBVIOUSLY MY MOM DOESN'T KNOW WHO SHE IS DEALING WITH.
I THINK THIS CALLS FOR REVENGE.
I'M LEAVING THE SEAT UP!

The Spats by Jeff Pickering

JEFFY, THERE ARE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS IN LIFE THAN MONEY!
...THE PROBLEM IS... THEY ALL COST MONEY!!
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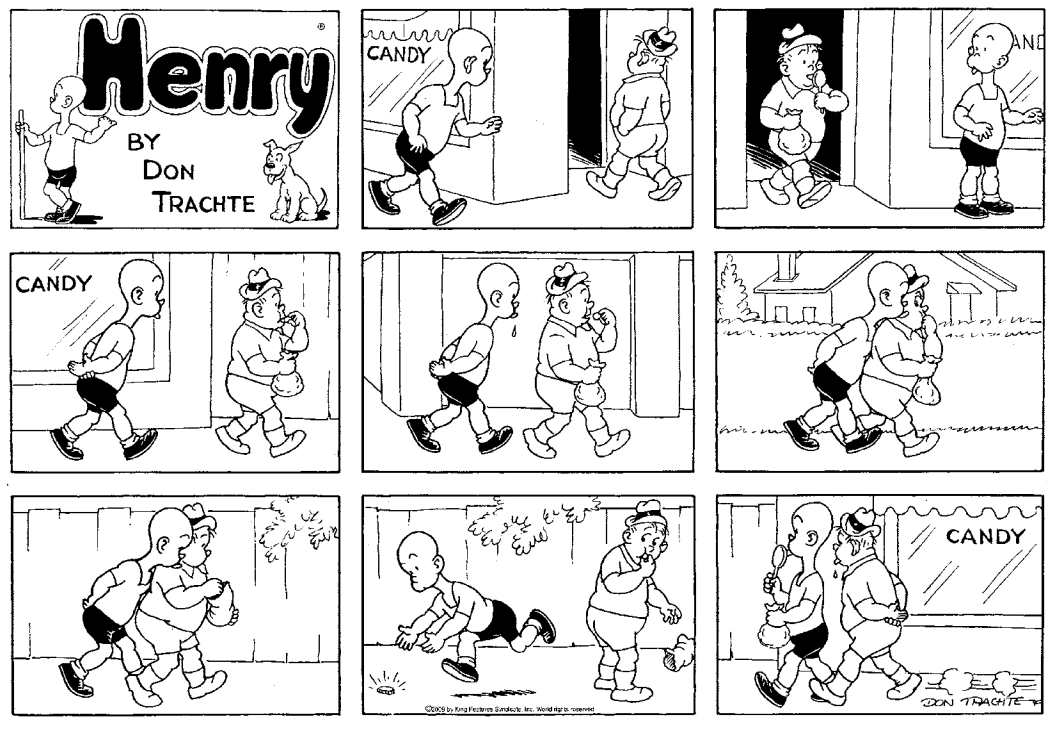
MARK TRAIL
MOST OF US HAVE A LOVE AFFAIR WITH CHOCOLATE, AND SINCE ITS DISCOVERY SOME 400 YEARS AGO, SCIENTISTS ARE STILL FINDING NEW USES FOR THIS AMAZING SUBSTANCE!
SINCE THE TIME OF THE ANCIENT MAYAN, AZTEC AND INCAN CULTURES, CHOCOLATE HAS BEEN REVERED...TODAY IN THE U.S. ABOUT 3 BILLION POUNDS IS CONSUMED YEARLY!
THIS COCOA SURE HITS THE SPOT, MARK!
IT SURE DOES...THE SCIENTIFIC NAME FOR COCOA MEANS "FOOD OF THE GODS," AND IT COMES FROM PODS WHICH GROW ON THE TRUNK OF A TROPICAL TREE!
DOES COCOA CONTAIN CAFFEINE?
YES, BUT VERY LITTLE COMPARED TO COFFEE...IT'S NOT JUST THE CAFFEINE THAT CAUSES A STIMULATORY EFFECT...
IT ALSO CONTAINS OTHER CHEMICALS THAT STIMULATE THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM!
CHOCOLATE IS BELIEVED TO HAVE SOME MEDICINAL BENEFITS, AND A RECENT STUDY SUGGESTS THAT DARK CHOCOLATE MAY LOWER BLOOD PRESSURE...
AND SCIENTISTS HAVE ALSO FOUND THAT MANY PEOPLE WITH DEPRESSION HAVE LOW LEVELS OF MAGNESIUM AND SEROTONIN, AND THEY FELT SOME RELIEF AFTER EATING CHOCOLATE!
MANY OF US ARE CHOCOHOLICS...ON VALENTINE'S DAY ALONE, AMERICANS WILL BUY MORE THAN 1 MILLION POUNDS!
JACK ELROD



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CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

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Saturday Issue:

- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

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Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

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ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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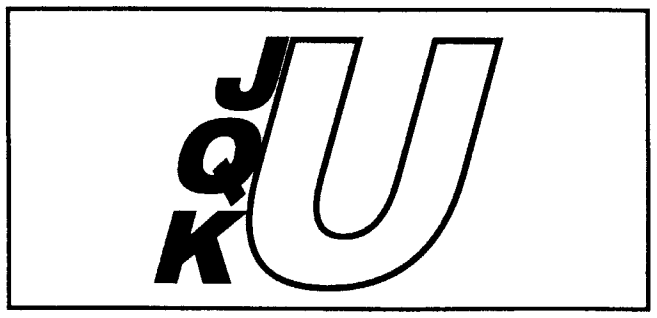
Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



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Find today's solution in this section

WHATZIT Solution:
The cards are stacked against you

BUD'S BAR
Sweetheart Night. Sat 14 @7pm. All Ladies coming through the door will receive one free Rose & Champagne plus a raffle ticket to win many gift & cash prizes. Merchant marines will be on special–after every $5.00 spent you will receive another raffle to win more.

BUD'S BAR
Every Wednesday @ 9pm
Jerry & Elli Jaming Band
Every Friday @ 9pm
Sam Joyner & The Blues Band
Let's Jam

AUTOMOTIVE

For Sale 2004 Nissan Sentra, 4dr, auto. trans. Good condition. $5,900. Call Zheng @ 287-7676

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Apartment room for rent. 2 bedroom $210. 3 bedroom $270. Located in Koblerville. Contact # 288-0728. Yoon Won Suck.

DRUNK DRIVING
Over the limit. Under arrest.

The University of Guam solicits applications to establish a list of eligibles for the following positions (Open and Promotional Examination—Subject to the Availability of Funds):

Position Title: **#027-09 CHEMIST III**

Location: Water & Environmental Research Institute

Contact the Human Resources Office for additional information regarding requirements, qualifications and application deadline, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday except weekends and holidays. The Government of Guam application form can be downloaded from the Human Resources Office website at http://www.uoghro.com. Call 671-735-2350/1.

The University of Guam is an Equal Opportunity Employer and Provider and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. For assistance, in these matters, please contact Ms. Elaine Faculo-Gogue, Institutional Compliance Officer at the EEO/ADA Office, Dorm II, Iya Hami Hall, Room 104, Tel. No. 671-735-2244; (TTY) or 671-735-2243.

/s/ JOHN V. ANGOCO
Chief Human Resources Officer

THIS AD IS PAID FOR BY UNIVERSITY FUNDS

Janet P. Catalan
PMB 1483 Box 10005
Saipan, MP 96950
(670) 235-8377

Pro Se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

JANET P. CATALAN, Petitioner,	)	FCD-DI CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-0323
vs.	)	
DANNY CATALAN, Respondent.	)	SUMMONS

TO: Danny Catalan

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within twenty (20) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to Janet P. Catalan whose address is PMB 192 Box 10005, Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 30th day of January, 2009.

/s/ Clerk of Court

Jeffrey P. Cabrera
P.O. Box 501116
Saipan, MP 96950
(670) 664-9059

Pro Se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

JEFFREY P. CABRERA, Petitioner,	)	FCD-DI CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-0443
vs.	)	
XIAQIN ZHOU CABRERA, Respondent.	)	SUMMONS

TO: Xiaqin Zhou Cabrera

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED and notified to file any answer you wish to make to the Complaint, a copy of which is given to you herewith, within twenty (20) days after service of the Summons upon you, and to deliver or mail a copy of your answer to Jeffrey P. Cabrera whose address is P.O. Box 501116, Saipan, MP 96950 as soon as practical after filing your answer or sending it to the Clerk of Courts for filing.

Your answer should be in writing and filed with the Clerk of this Court at Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950. It may be prepared for you by your counsel and sent to the Clerk of this Court by messenger or Mail. It is not necessary for you to appear personally until further notice. If you fail to file and answer in accordance with this summons, judgement by default may be taken against you for relief in the complaint.

Dated this 30th day of January, 2009.

/s/ Clerk of Court

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Hafa Adai!
Saipan Trib
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 14, 2007
There is still hope for nonimm
joins Micronesia
OPINION METER
With what you know of the CUC situation, do you support the adoption of new

235- NEWS

Marion's dunk gives Heat 95-93 win

CHICAGO (AP)—Shawn Marion's dunk with 1.1 seconds left gave the Miami Heat a 95-93 win over the Chicago Bulls on Thursday night.

Dwyane Wade, selected as a starter for the Eastern Conference in the NBA All-Star game this weekend in Phoenix, scored 24 points. Wade scored eight points in the fourth quarter and found Marion for the decisive dunk.

Reserve Michael Beasley finished with 21 points for the Heat, who came in as a loser of five out of the last seven games.

Ben Gordon finished with 34 points for Chicago.

With Miami trailing 86-85, Wade led an 8-0 run. Mario Chalmers had a reverse layup to give Miami the lead back, then Marion blocked Derrick Rose's shot and finished with a dunk on the other end. Wade made a jumper, then hit a fadeaway over Rose to give the Heat a 93-86 lead with 1:13 left.

But the Bulls came back by scoring seven consecutive points. Tyrus Thomas' basket got them within 93-90 with 35 seconds left, then Ben Gordon was fouled by Daequan Cook on a 3-point attempt. He hit all three free throws to tie the game at 93 with 6.5 seconds left.

Kirk Hinrich then stole Marion's inbound pass, but the Bulls turned it over when Wade did the same to Thabo Sefolosha's pass with 3.5 seconds left.

The Heat executed this time when Wade found a streaking Marion for an easy dunk.

After trailing by 11 to start the fourth quarter, Chicago came back to take the lead. Gordon had a three-point play with 3:54 left to get the Bulls within 85-84. Then Rose gave the Bulls the lead by blowing by Chalmers.

The Heat led by 13 early in the third quarter, but the Bulls cut into the lead.

Beasley, picked No. 2 in this year's draft after Rose, highlighted the third quarter with 13 points on 5-for-5 shooting. He showed his range by hitting a 3 to give the Heat a 74-60 lead with 1:37 left in the period.

Trailing 76-62, the Bulls cut into the Heat lead in the fourth quarter. Andres Nocioni hit a 3 with 4.3 left in the the third quarter, then Chicago outscored Miami 10-2 to start the fourth period.

AP

Miami Heat forward Shawn Marion celebrates his game-winning basket against the Chicago Bulls during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Chicago, Thursday, Feb. 12, 2009.

The Heat closed the first half by outscoring the Bulls 10-2. Udonis Haslem and Marion had back-to-back dunks, then Wade had a one-handed reverse layup. Marion gave Miami a 50-39 lead at the half with a jumper.

Marion, Haslem, Wade, and Cook all scored eight points in the half for Miami. Gordon led the Bulls with 14 points on 6-of-7 shooting.

Celtics 99, Mavericks 92

At Dallas, Paul Pierce scored 18 of his 31 points in the fourth quarter, finally giving Boston its first lead, then hit two jumpers in the final 1:12 to put the Celtics ahead to stay. Pierce's tiebreaking 11-footer gave the Celtics a 93-91 lead. At the other end, he took an elbow to the head from a charging Dirk Nowitzki, who was called for the foul. Then Pierce made another step-back jumper, from 14 feet, to seal the game.

Coach Doc Rivers wasn't on the Celtics bench to see the end of the game, having been ejected because of two technical fouls late in the third quarter. That came in a sequence when Kevin Garnett got three fouls in a matter of seconds—two personals and a technical while battling with Nowitzki.

Boston (44-11), the defending champion, goes into the All-Star break with the most victories in the NBA. The Celtics have won nine consecutive road games.

Warriors 105, Trail Blazers 98

At Oakland, Calif., Corey Maggette had 24 points, Monta Ellis made three key baskets down the stretch and the Warriors won their third in a row.

Stephen Jackson and Ellis scored 20 points apiece, while Rony Turiaf had 14 points and 11 rebounds for his first double-double in nearly two years.

Brandon Roy scored 37 points and LaMarcus Aldridge added 20 for the Blazers, who have not won at Golden State since Nov. 3, 2004.

The Warriors led by as much as 18 in the second half, but had to hold off a late charge by Portland, which pulled within 97-93 on a dunk by Greg Oden with 25 seconds remaining. Golden State then iced the game at the free throw line, going 8-for-8 in the final 23 seconds.

Lawyers: Is sheriff too aggressive in Phelps case?

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—Even if a South Carolina sheriff is successful in building a marijuana case against swimming superstar Michael Phelps, it might be hard to make the charges stick, defense attorneys say.

The case took a turn Thursday when lawyers for two people said their clients were among eight arrested last week and questioned at length about the November party near the University of South Carolina where Phelps was photographed smoking from a marijuana pipe. At the time, the men were renters at the house.

The effort to prosecute Phelps on what would be at most a minor drug charge seem extreme compared to similar cases, lawyers said, and have led some to question whether the sheriff is being overzealous because he's dealing with a celebrity.

"The efforts that are being made here are unlike anything I've ever seen before," said Jack Swerling, a defense attorney in South Carolina. "I know Leon Lott, I know him to be an honorable guy. I've known him for 30 something years. But the efforts here are extraordinary on simple possession cases."

After the photo was Phelps was published Feb. 1, Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott said his office would investigate and possibly charge Phelps, though officials have not specified what the offense might be. Since then, authorities have released little information, and the sheriff's department refused to talk again Thursday.

Lott has made fighting drug crimes a central plank of his career. He rose from patrol officer to captain of the narcotics division in the early 1990s and was well-known in the county for wearing stylish suits like the drug agents on "Miami Vice" and driving a Porsche seized from a drug dealer. He was elected sheriff in 1996.

Lawyers for the two men say they were questioned almost exclusively about Phelps and charged with misdemeanor marijuana possession.

Authorities haven't contacted the swimmer, who issued an apology for his behavior earlier this month, one of his agents said.

"Michael has not been contacted and we are not going to speculate," said agent Drew Johnson.

Defense attorney Dick Harpootlian and fellow defense attorney Joseph MuCulloch said deputies searched at least two houses. The men told their lawyers the raids went down like a major drug bust, and 12 deputies burst into the home with guns drawn, pulling small amounts of marijuana from those arrested. Several computers and storage devices were also seized, Harpootlian said.

The lawyers did not release the names of their clients, but Harpootlian said that his client didn't even see Phelps smoke marijuana at the party. McCulloch said his client was out of town, and only lived at the home when the party happened. Both men have since moved.

"After they arrested him, they didn't ask him where did you get the marijuana or who sold it to you. Almost all the questions they asked him were about Michael Phelps," Harpootlian said. He added: "It was like they were busting the biggest heroin distributor in the country."

The investigators appear to be trying to build a case against Phelps from others—a tactic normally used to bring down drug dealers with a large amounts of cocaine or methamphetamine, not someone who smoked marijuana five months ago, said Chip Price, a Greenville attorney who has dealt with drug cases for 33 years.

"Never have I seen anything like this on a simple marijuana case," Price said.

McCulloch, who said his client was out of town at the time, doubted that anything his client told authorities would assist them in the case against Phelps.

"It seems to me that Richland County has a host of its own crime problems much more serious than a kid featured in a photograph with a bong in his hand," he said.

Investigators don't need to have the marijuana Phelps may have had that night to make a case against him, although the lack of physical evidence makes things a lot tougher. They will need several witnesses saying they were at the party, smoked marijuana in that pipe and saw Phelps smoke it too, said Swerling.

Elgin Baylor sheds light on Clippers lawsuit

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—Elgin Baylor is taking his game to a different court.

One day after filing a discrimination suit against the Los Angeles Clippers and the NBA, Baylor provided insight into his action against the team for whom he served as general manager for 22 years and the league in which he excelled as a player for 14 seasons.

"The way I was treated by the NBA and the Clippers was unfair and in many ways discriminatory, it was wrong," said Baylor, reading from a prepared statement at a news conference at the office of his lawyer, Carl Douglas.

"We are forced to take this action because our effort to resolve this dispute quietly were ignored. So I look forward to having my day in court."

Flanked by a four-person legal team and his wife Elaine, the 74-year-old Baylor—a member of basketball's Hall of Fame—suggested he had endured a bizarre working arrangement with the Clippers and owner Donald Sterling that turned sour in recent years with the team trying to force him out.

"I worked with the Clipper organization on a contract for only my first six years, until 1993, after that it was if I had passed the smell test," said Baylor, the team's GM until October 2008. "For the remainder of the time I was told I did not need a formal written agreement. Donald Sterling always informed me whenever I asked about my contract situation and my salary, that I was a 'lifer', that I would remain with the Clipper family until I decided to retire."

Baylor claims that although coach Mike Dunleavy was rewarded with a lucrative contract following the Clippers run to the playoffs in 2006, Sterling did not provide any economic reward to Baylor for his efforts as the team GM.

"The team I pushed Donald Sterling to assemble made it to the second round of the playoffs exceeding everyone's expectations," said Baylor. "I was honored by the Sporting News to be named the NBA executive of the year. The team's coach was acknowledged and rewarded with a long-term contract worth over $20 million. When I asked [Sterling] if he was going to take care of me, he said nothing, he offered me nothing, he did nothing, no salary increase, no bonus nothing."

Baylor further claims to have discovered in 2008 that Dunleavy had been secretly assigned many of his duties and the team was trying to force him to retire.

"This past August I was handed an agreement and told to 'take it or leave it.' Given that I had invested so much to the Clippers and the NBA I was traumatized by this situation and today I remain mentally and emotionally devastated," said Baylor. "I did not retire, I have so much more to give."

Selig on A-Rod: 'Shamed the game'

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Unable to punish Alex Rodriguez for flunking a drug test that was supposed to be anonymous, Bud Selig could only chastise him.

"What Alex did was wrong and he will have to live with the damage he has done to his name and reputation," the commissioner said Thursday, three days after the Yankees star admitted using banned substances from 2001-2003 while playing for the Texas Rangers.

"While Alex deserves credit for publicly confronting the issue, there is no valid excuse for using such substances, and those who use them have shamed the game," Selig said.

Rodriguez's admission followed a *Sports Illustrated* report that he was on a list of 104 players who tested positive for steroids in 2003, when testing was intended only to determine the extent of steroid use in baseball.

The results were seized by the government in 2004 and remain under seal.

Because it was an anonymous test and because Rodriguez's confession involved years before the drug agreement took effect, there is little Selig can do in terms of punishment.

Players and owners didn't agree to a joint drug program until August 2002, and testing with punishment didn't start until 2004.

"It is important to remember that these recent revelations relate to pre-program activity," Selig said. "Under our current drug program, if you are caught using steroids and/or amphetamines, you will be punished. Since 2005, every player who has tested positive for steroids has been suspended for as much as 50 games."

Yankees manager Joe Girardi, speaking after his first staff meeting of spring training, said he wasn't sure whether he wanted Rodriguez to address the team. Position players are due to report Tuesday and start workouts the following day.

"If it's in his heart, yes, I would, but if it's not, that's OK, too," he said.

AP

In this Jan. 17, 2008 file photo, Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig addresses the media during a news conference in Scottsdale, Ariz.

In 2008, there were three major league violations and 68 minor league violations for performance-enhancing drugs. So far this year, there have been two major league and three minor league violations.

"We are fully committed to ridding our game of steroids and other performance-enhancing substances. These drugs and those who use them and facilitate their use threaten the integrity of our sport," Selig said. "But we will not rest or relax our efforts until the use of these illegal drugs are gone from baseball."

Union head Donald Fehr declined to comment on Selig's statements. Selig did not respond to SI's allegation that Gene Orza, the union's chief operating officer, told a player in 2004 that he would be tested Sept. 24. Orza denies tipping off players to drug tests.

Judge dismisses bulk of McNamee defamation suit

HOUSTON (AP)—A federal judge dismissed most of Roger Clemens' defamation lawsuit against his former personal trainer on Thursday, saying statements made in the Mitchell Report on doping in baseball are protected.

Brian McNamee has told federal agents, baseball investigator George Mitchell and a House of Representatives committee that he injected Clemens more than a dozen times with steroids and human growth hormone from 1998-2001.

McNamee's attorneys said Clemens' lawsuit should be thrown out because McNamee was compelled to cooperate by federal investigators.

U.S. District Judge Keith Ellison agreed, but he left in McNamee's statements to Andy Pettitte, Clemens' former New York Yankees teammate. McNamee told Pettitte that Clemens had used HGH and steroids.

Ellison said Clemens must file an amended complaint within 30 days to pursue that claim further and provide specific information about how he was harmed by the statements.

Earl Ward, one of McNamee's attorneys, said the decision was a total victory for McNamee and proof that Clemens' lawsuit never had merit.

"If they were doing things in a wise and reasonable manner, they would just abandon this," Ward said. "It's frivolous because there's nothing that Brian said that wasn't truthful. Roger knows that. Brian told the truth, and so you can't bring a defamation lawsuit for comments that are truthful."

Clemens has repeatedly denied McNamee's accusations and sued last year. Prosecutors have asked a federal grand jury in Washington to decide whether to indict the seven-time Cy Young Award winner for lying under oath to Congress last year when he denied using steroids or HGH.

Rusty Hardin, Clemens' attorney, said in a statement that he was pleased with Ellison's ruling on McNamee's statements to Pettitte.

"We are reviewing other parts of the decision that we disagree with to determine how we should best proceed," Hardin wrote.

Ward said Clemens' side would be wise to formally withdraw the lawsuit, or simply let the deadline expire.

"If that claim goes forward, we will eventually prevail," Ward said. "It would be more problems for Roger. He's going to have to testify again under oath. He's going to have to be cross-examined. The deposition would be very intense and not in his favor."

Garrigus, Johnson share Pebble Beach lead

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. (AP)—Sunshine and tranquil conditions turned the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am into paradise Thursday, and it was particularly ideal for big hitters Robert Garrigus and Dustin Johnson.

Garrigus reached the uphill, 529-yard seventh hole at Spyglass Hill with a 5-iron and holed a 50-foot eagle putt, then closed out his first round with consecutive birdies for a 7-under 65.

Johnson, another natural athlete with height and power, holed out a 9-iron from 151 yards for eagle on the first hole at Pebble Beach and played bogey-free for a 65.

Such scores are rare at Spyglass and Pebble except when the wind and rain go on hiatus, which was the case on a gorgeous afternoon on the Monterey Peninsula. And there's a big advantage with length on soft courses in chilly weather.

"I look forward to golf courses playing long. That's my game," said Garrigus, who is making his 90th start on the PGA Tour and found his name atop the leaderboard for the first time after any round.

Rich Beem isn't particularly long, but he did practically nothing wrong.

The former PGA champion hasn't been back to the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am since 2000, and he had no intention of returning until he lost his card last year and could no longer choose where he wanted to play. But he was loving it Thursday, opening with three birdies and finishing with two more.

The only drama came early, when Beem felt a few drops of rain on the first hole at Pebble Beach and asked his caddie for the umbrella.

"What umbrella?" Bill Heim replied.

Turns out it had been misplaced, and Beem dashed into the pro shop to borrow one. He didn't need it, as the sun quickly emerged and the birdies started falling.

Also at 66 were Vaughn Taylor (Pebble Beach) and Charley Hoffman (Spyglass Hill).

Vijay Singh, in his first tournament since minor knee surgery after the season-opening Mercedes-Benz Championship, opened with a 72 at Poppy Hills, while double major winner Padraig Harrington struggled to a 74 on the same course.

Phil Mickelson had a 72 at Spyglass.

Garrigus is among the longest hitters in golf, and it's no accident.

His dream of playing baseball ended at age 13 when he threw out his arm on the mound and broke his leg on a dirt bike. His grandfather handed him a driver and told him to swing as hard as he could until he turned 18.

"Sure enough, I was hitting it over 300 yards when I was 15 years old," he said.

The rest of the game has been slow to catch up. Garrigus shot 93 the first time he played and was down to 69 a year later, but against stronger competition, he had to learn to keep the ball in the short grass and make some putts. Changing to a 28-inch putter helped the latter, and he is getting more comfortable on tour.

"It's kind of an ego thing, but I really don't want to be known as the guy who hit it farther," he said. "I want to be known as the guy who makes everything, because that's where the money is."

His finish was on the money at Spyglass, traditionally the tougher of the three courses, starting with his 5-iron into the par-5 seventh green. Garrigus followed that with an 8-iron into 8 feet and another 8-iron into 15 feet on the last two holes for birdie.

Johnson concedes his length helps, especially reaching par 5s that others can't, but his 65 came despite making only one birdie on the par 5. He nearly reached the 18th in two, but chipped to 10 feet and missed the putt.

Even so, he had few complaints about the day.

"It was beautiful out there," he said. "You can't have a bad time on this golf course."

Davis Love III was among the early leaders until he dropped a few shots coming in and had to settle for a 69. As for the pro-am portion of the round, his partner made it sound like a case of "Hit the ball, drag Tim."

PGA Tour commissioner Tim Finchem played for the first time, and while he contributed a few shots along the way, he made double bogeys on two holes when he got a stroke with his handicap, and they were holes were Love made bogey.

Finchem conceded to being nervous, and "if you watched any of my shots, you could tell."

"It was great fun," he said. "As many times as I've been on the fairway with guys talking to them, when you get to observe that close, it does reacquaint you with how good they are. And you get the feeling of being totally inadequate."

Mark Calcavecchia was among those at 67, while Retief Goosen was in the large group at 68. The conditions were so good that 87 players broke par, a group that included Jim Furyk, who shot 71 at Spyglass in his 2009 debut.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	44	11	.800	—
Philadelphia	27	24	.529	15
New Jersey	24	29	.453	19
New York	21	31	.404	21 1/2
Toronto	21	34	.382	23

Southeast Division

Orlando	38	13	.745	—
Atlanta	31	21	.596	7 1/2
Miami	28	24	.538	10 1/2
Charlotte	21	31	.404	17 1/2
Washington	11	42	.208	28

Central Division

Cleveland	40	11	.784	—
Detroit	27	24	.529	13
Milwaukee	26	29	.473	16
Chicago	23	30	.434	18
Indiana	21	33	.389	20 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	35	16	.686	—
Houston	32	21	.604	4
New Orleans	30	20	.600	4 1/2
Dallas	31	21	.596	4 1/2
Memphis	15	37	.288	20 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	36	17	.679	—
Portland	32	20	.615	3 1/2
Utah	30	23	.566	6
Minnesota	17	34	.333	18
Oklahoma City	13	40	.245	23

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	42	10	.808	—
Phoenix	28	23	.549	13 1/2
Golden State	19	35	.352	24
L.A. Clippers	13	40	.245	29 1/2
Sacramento	11	43	.204	32

Yesterday's Games

Miami 95, Chicago 93
Boston 99, Dallas 92
Golden State 105, Portland 98

AT&T PEBBLE BEACH NATIONAL PRO-AM SCORES

PEBBLE BEACH, California (AP)— Scores Thursday from the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am, a $6.1 million US PGA Tour event on three par-72 courses: 6,816-yard Pebble Beach Golf Links; 6,953-yard Poppy Hills; and 6,944-yard Spyglass Hill:

FIRST ROUND

Robert Garrigus	32-33—65
Dustin Johnson	32-33—65
Rich Beem	31-35—66
Vaughn Taylor	32-34—66
Charley Hoffman	33-33—66
Bill Lunde	34-33—67
Mike Weir	35-32—67
Mark Calcavecchia	34-33—67
Jason Day	32-35—67
Steve Elkington	34-33—67
Michael Allen	34-33—67
D.J. Trahan	36-31—67
Jeff Quinney	32-36—68
Dean Wilson	33-35—68
Matt Bettencourt	36-32—68
Mark Brooks	33-35—68
Greg Owen	33-35—68
Charlie Wi	35-33—68
Tom Scherrer	34-34—68
Aron Price	35-33—68
Bob Estes	35-33—68
Fredrik Jacobson	34-34—68
Ted Purdy	32-36—68
Arjun Atwal	32-36—68
Paul Goydos	34-34—68
Brian Vranesh	36-32—68
Retief Goosen	37-31—68
Kevin Chappell	33-35—68
Jonathan Kaye	35-34—69
John Ellis	34-35—69
Len Mattiace	35-34—69
K.J. Choi	33-36—69
Jeff Overton	34-35—69
Davis Love III	33-36—69
Chris Stroud	36-33—69
Shigeki Maruyama	35-34—69
Zack Miller	33-36—69
Jeff Maggert	35-34—69
Ricky Barnes	36-33—69
Brendon de Jonge	33-36—69
Michael Letzig	32-37—69
Y.E. Yang	33-36—69
Mathew Goggin	34-36—70
Steve Lowery	35-35—70
Rick Price	37-33—70
Kevin Streelman	35-35—70
Bo Van Pelt	35-35—70
Mark Wilson	35-35—70
Chris DiMarco	34-36—70
Jay Williamson	35-35—70
Tyler Aldridge	33-37—70
Matt Weibring	34-36—70
John Huston	35-35—70
Will MacKenzie	36-34—70
Chris Smith	36-34—70
Joel Sjoholm	35-35—70
Bob Heintz	34-37—71
Dudley Hart	34-37—71
Scott Gutschewski	37-34—71
Richard S. Johnson	37-34—71
Tim Clark	34-37—71
Spencer Levin	35-36—71
Jimmy Walker	35-36—71
Omar Uresti	36-35—71
Lee Janzen	37-34—71
Peter Tomasulo	36-35—71
Matt Jones	37-34—71
Tom Lehman	36-35—71
Kirk Triplett	38-33—71
Brian Bateman	34-37—71
Todd Hamilton	35-36—71
Jim Furyk	35-36—71
Matt Kuchar	34-37—71
Kevin Stadler	37-34—71
Kenny Perry	37-34—71
Gary Woodland	37-34—71
Greg Chalmers	35-36—71
Tommy Gainey	36-35—71
David Mathis	37-34—71
Derek Fathauer	35-36—71
J.J. Henry	37-34—71
Sean O'Hair	35-36—71
Jonathan Byrd	37-34—71
Brandt Snedeker	34-37—71
Joe Ogilvie	36-35—71
Brad Adamonis	34-37—71
Kevin Na	34-37—71
Webb Simpson	35-36—71
Ken Duke	37-34—71
Colt Knost	36-36—72
Tim Herron	35-37—72
Brian Davis	35-37—72
Kent Jones	36-36—72
J.P. Hayes	36-36—72
John Mallinger	36-36—72
Paul McGinley	34-38—72
Phil Mickelson	35-37—72
Brad Faxon	34-38—72
Hunter Mahan	33-39—72
Frank Lickliter II	37-35—72
Jarrod Lyle	34-38—72
Rob Grube	35-37—72
Brett Quigley	36-36—72
Steve Flesch	38-34—72
Todd Fischer	39-33—72
Vijay Singh	36-36—72
Eric Axley	35-37—72
Charles Howell III	34-38—72
Casey Wittenberg	36-36—72
Michael Thompson	38-34—72
Tim Petrovic	36-36—72
Ryan Moore	35-37—72
Olin Browne	38-34—72
Matthew Borchert	35-37—72
Tom Pernice, Jr.	38-34—72
Marc Leishman	37-35—72
Tag Ridings	38-34—72
David Duval	36-37—73
Jesper Parnevik	40-33—73
Darron Stiles	38-35—73
James Driscoll	36-37—73
Pat Perez	35-38—73
Craig Barlow	38-35—73
Brent Geiberger	37-36—73
Troy Matteson	36-37—73
Alex Cejka	36-37—73
D.A. Points	38-35—73
Chris Kirk	33-40—73
James Oh	38-35—73
Johnson Wagner	36-37—73
Nicholas Thompson	36-37—73
Glen Day	36-37—73
Joe Durant	39-34—73
Jeff Klauk	36-37—73
Fred Couples	37-36—73
Steve Allan	39-34—73
Aaron Watkins	36-37—73
Andrew Magee	37-37—74
Kevin Sutherland	38-36—74
Padraig Harrington	38-36—74
Scott McCarron	37-37—74
Wil Collins	38-36—74
Paul Stankowski	40-34—74
Billy Andrade	40-34—74
Corey Pavin	37-37—74
David Toms	36-38—74
Charles Warren	40-34—74
J.B. Holmes	36-38—74
Ryan Palmer	36-38—74
Brendon Todd	40-34—74
Greg Kraft	37-37—74
Jason Gore	36-39—75
Carlos Franco	38-37—75
Skip Kendall	37-38—75
Daniel Chopra	39-36—75
Chris Riley	39-36—75
Garrett Willis	37-38—75
Bobby Clampett	35-40—75
Leif Olson	39-36—75
Troy Kelly	40-35—75
Jason Bohn	40-35—75
Nick Watney	41-34—75
Jason Dufner	37-38—75
Parker McLachlin	38-38—76
Notah Begay III	40-36—76
Marco Dawson	40-36—76
Bryce Molder	38-38—76
Clint Jensen	38-38—76
Kris Blanks	38-38—76
Jason Schmuhl	39-37—76
Robert Gamez	38-38—76
Tommy Armour III	40-36—76
Robert Damron	39-38—77
Dicky Pride	41-36—77
Marc Turnesa	38-39—77
Scott Sterling	40-37—77
Patrick Sheehan	37-40—77
Kyle Thompson	37-41—78
Jay Delsing	38-41—79
Robert Floyd	40-40—80

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

BUDWEISER SOFTBALL STANDINGS

Men's Division

DCCA	14	0
CPA	10	2
Freedom Air	9	2
Joeten Motor Jets	10	3
Beach Boys	9	3
Legislature	9	5
No Zone	9	4
Docomo	9	4
P&S	6	5
DLNR	6	7
POI	5	6
CRM/DEQ	5	7
CHC	4	8
PSS	4	9
CUC	3	9
Law & Order	3	9
PIC	2	8
Customs	2	8
Mayor's	2	11
Hopwood	0	11

Women's Division

NMC	8	1
Finance	4	4
DCCA	4	5
CUC	4	4
CHC	1	7

Fiji Water to take over from Bing in youth bowling

Starting this February, the monthly Prince and Princess of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament will be sponsored by Fiji Water.

Dubbed the Fiji Water Prince and Princess of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament, the competition is open to youth bowlers (12 to 19 years old, not bowling in any leagues or averaging less than 170 in any league).

The Prince and Princess of the Lanes will be held in Day 1 of the Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Bowling Tournament set for this Sunday, Feb. 15, at the Saipan Bowling Center. Entry fee is $10.

Incidentally, the Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Bowling Tournament's second day will be held on Monday, Feb. 16, also at the Oleai bowling venue.

Sunday's Budweiser roll-off begins at 3pm, while Monday's competition starts at 6pm. Registration starts 30 minutes prior to game time. Awarding ceremonies immediately follow the end of competition on Monday.

The competition is exclusive for SBA members with participants limited to the first 60 entries for each day.

Members have the option to bowl on the Sunday or Monday, or on both days, provided that the $15 entry fee is paid. Bowlers who did not bowl on Sunday will be given priority for the Monday shift. Only the higher score will count for the tournament. All participants have to pay the $15 SBA annual membership fee.

The champion is guaranteed $100 in prize money, but it could go up to as much $150 depending on the number of participants. Women participants will only have separate prizes if there are at least 10 entries.

After being sponsor-less for the whole of 2007, the Saipan Bowling Association's monthly King and Queen of the Lanes Tenpin Bowling Tournament as well as its season-ending bowlfest have secured the help of MARPAC for last year and this year's competition.

The Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes Tournament as well as the Fiji Water youth competition aim to crown 12 monthly champions through the course of the year.

For early registration and payment, see or contact Gigi or Ross Zapanta at 288-5627 or email zapanta@pticom.com. ***(SBA)***

NMA

From Page 28

Secretary general and treasurer Robin Sapong, director of marketing and sponsorship Gabriel White, director of coaches' development Elias Rangamar, and NMA volunteers were also present at the awards ceremony.

Rasguiy of Whispering Palms and Doone of Dandan Elementary School were cited for their first place finishes in the 800m and 1500m races (Rastguiy) and 200m run and softball throw (Doone) during the 2008 McDonald's All Schools Championships.

Race was also a force in the All Schools meet winning the 400m and 800m races and claiming the 1600m race victory in the All Schools Cross Country Championships for the third time, while Brel of Kagman Elementary School triumphed in the 100m, 200m, and 800m runs.

Corella of Whispering Palms topped the 200m and 400m runs and placed third in the long jump in the All Schools meet, while Jones ruled the 800m, 1500m, and 3000m races and finished third in 400m run in the All Schools, and the won, anew in the 1600m cross country.

Rangamar made her mark in the All Schools, but her more significant performance came in the 2008 Oceania Area Championships where she won a bronze medal in the U18 women's heptathlon.

Teregeyo tied Phillip in the boys' 14-and-under plum after two first place finishes [discuss and shot put] and two runner-ups [javelin and high jump] in All Schools. Phillip won three events (100m and 200m races, and long jump) in the same tournament.

Benavente had two first place finishes (discus and shot put and two second (high jump and javelin) to share honors with Wonenberg, who gave the CNMI a gold medal in the heptathlon event in the Oceania meet in June.

Iguel of Kagman High School took the honors in the boys' 18-and-under after his outstanding performance in the All Schools and active participation in the Oceania championships.

Fellow Kagman student Bennett was cited for her record-breaking performances in the area championships, while Omar was also recognized for his remarkable efforts in the same event.

Kabiriel and Oshima-Berger won their second straight Road Runner trophies after dominating middle and long distance races in the CNMI.

DCCA

From Page 28

DCCA's defense allowed Mayor's Office to score only at the bottom of the fourth inning to wrap up the game after only five complete innings.

Pitcher Mel Sakisat gave up six hits and walked three for DCCA's easy win.

On offense, third baseman Joey Dela Cruz made two homers and recorded six RBIs, while shortstop Craig Sanchez made one homer. Sakisat also performed well at bat going 4-for-4 and recording two RBIs, while Julian Camacho was also perfect hitting 4-for-4 and adding two RBIs. Second baseman Mario Sablan was only 2-for-4 at bat, but connected on a two two-run single in the first and brought one runner home in the second.

Jets 22, DEQ/CRM 3

The second game in the men's division was also a one-sided affair with the Joeten Motors Jets notching a 22-3 triumph.

The win improved the Jets' record to 10-3, while the loss dropped DEQ/CRM to a 5-7 slate.

Leftfielder Ben Taisacan led the Jets with his 4-for-4 stint at bat and six RBIs. He blasted a three-run homer in the fifth inning, anchoring the team's six-run top of the fifth.

The Jets shut out DEC/CRM in the first two innings, while scoring 10 runs to take control of the game and the former never looked back.

DEQ/CRM scored two runs at the bottom of the third with Elmer's Sablan double driving Ed Manibusan home and Gus Pangelinan's single bringing Sablan to home plate. DEQ/CRM's third run was courtesy of a solo roundtripper from Loy Atalig.

CPA 20, PSS 12

In the last game of the night, Commonwealth Ports Authority also gained its 10th win in 12 games after downing Public School System, 20-12.

A seven-run top of the fifth allowed CPA to steal the lead, 8-5. PSS led, 5-1, after four complete innings when CPA made a move at the top of the fourth with leftfielder Byron Kaipat hitting a three-run homer and four more runners scoring.

PSS answered with seven runs in the next two innings to retake the lead, 12-9, but CPA countered with an 11-run top of the seventh to pull ahead, anew, 20-18.

CPA completed the come-from-behind win after shutting out PSS at the bottom of the seventh.

Legislature 7, CUC 4

Monday night's action in the slow-pitch softball league was marked by two forfeited games, as only Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and Legislature completed their match at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

Legislature nailed a 7-4 win over CUC to improve to a 9-5 record and take solo fifth place in the team standings.

The two other games—Commonwealth Health Center vs. Northern Marianas College (women's), and the Beach Boys vs. No Zone—were forfeited in favor of NMC and the Beach Boys.

CHC and NMC were supposed to play in the second game at 7:30pm, but the former showed up for the game with only five players.

The same thing happened to No Zone dropping the team to a 9-4 record for a tie for fifth place with Docomo.

The Beach Boys claimed their ninth win in 12 games.

In the lone game Monday night, Legislature shut out CUC in the first five innings with pitcher Pete Towai allowing only five hits and lifting the Lawmakers to a victory.

8 TEAMS

From Page 28

The last three playing days of the month-long league will be on Feb. 18, 25, and March 4. Games are played from 5pm to 9pm.

The league aims to prepare beach volleyball players on Saipan for the 17th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival, which will run from March 6 to 8.

The Marianas Cup will have Saipan players battling pros from the U.S., Korea, and Japan.

Pool A is composed of the tandems of Rob Epley-Rob Jordan, Jess Palacios-Jonas Barcinas, Marino and Derrick Pungilug, and Tyce Mister-Chris Nelson.

Pool B has the duos of Dan Westphal-Luther Taylor, Larry Sharry and Jazz Roscow, Quinn-Bruce Berline, and Scott Eck and a certain Leo.

Three games were played in Pool A with the pairs of Palacios and Barcinas splitting their first two matches.

The tandem of Palacios and Barcinas won over Jordan and Epley, 21-7, but the first pair bowed to Mister and Nelson, 11-21, in the third match.

In Pool B, Sharry and Roscow had a 2-0 start after topping Taylor and Westphal, 21-17, and downing Quinn and Berline, 21-15.

Taylor and Westphal recovered and improved to a 1-1 record after defeating Quinn and Berline, 21-18.

After the round-robin play, eight squads will advance to the double-elimination playoffs.

Teams still interested to play in the league are asked to contact Quinn at 287-0318 for more information. Entrance fee is $10 per player for NMIVA member and $15 for non-member.

Selig on A-Rod: 'Shamed the game'

Unable to punish Alex Rodriguez for flunking a drug test that was supposed to be anonymous, Bud Selig could only chastise him.

26

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Marion's dunk gives Heat 95-93 win

Shawn Marion's dunk with 1.1 seconds left gave the Miami Heat a 95-93 win over the Chicago Bulls on Thursday night.

25

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The top performers of 2008 pose with their trophies during the Northern Marianas Athletics Awards Banquet Thursday night at Minatchom Atdao Pavilion. Joining them are NMA president Kurt Barnes, fifth left back row, and vice president Lou Wabol, left back row.

NMA fetes top athletes of 2008

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Northern Marianas Athletics honored 16 individuals who made significant performances last season during the NMA Annual Awards Banquet at the Minatchom Atdao Pavilion Thursday night.

Named 2008 NMA Athletes of the Year in their respective age groups were Neghar Rastguiy and Maxten Doone (8-and-under); Gabrielle Race and Jesse Brel (10-and-under); Ilia Corella and Angelo Jones (12-and-under); Lia Rangamar, Damart Teregeyo, and Brandon Phillip (14-and-under); Jacque Wonenberg, Jenequa Benavente, and Jeusus Iguel (18-and-under); and Yvonne Bennett and Tyrone Omar (Open). Long distance runners Jack Kabiriel and Mamiko Oshima-Berger were selected Road Runners of the Year, and together with the Athletes of the Year in various age groups, they received trophies from NMA president Kurt Barnes and vice president Lou Wabol.

See NMA on Page 27

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Luther Taylor returns the ball while teammate Dan Westphal looks on during their game against Russ Quinn and Bruce Berline in the NMIVA Two-man Beach Volleyball League Wednesday night on the Pacific Islands Club sand court.

8 teams join two-man beach V-ball league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The NMIVA Two-man Beach Volleyball League kicked off Wednesday night on the Pacific Islands Club sand court with eight teams joining the Marianas Cup tune-up competition.

Participating teams were divided into two pools and will play a round robin in regulation. But tournament organizer Russ Quinn said interested teams can still register and start playing next week.

See 8 TEAMS on Page 27

DCCA keeps winning streak

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Defending champion Department of Community and Cultural Affairs extended its winning run to 14 games after routing Saipan Mayor's Office, 19-2, in the 2008 Inter-Government/ Business Slow-pitch Softball League Thursday night at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

See DCCA on Page 27

The Beach Boys' Ricky Rafael practices his pitching skills during a warm up in their game against No Zone in the 2008 Inter Government-Business Slow-pitch Softball League Monday night at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO